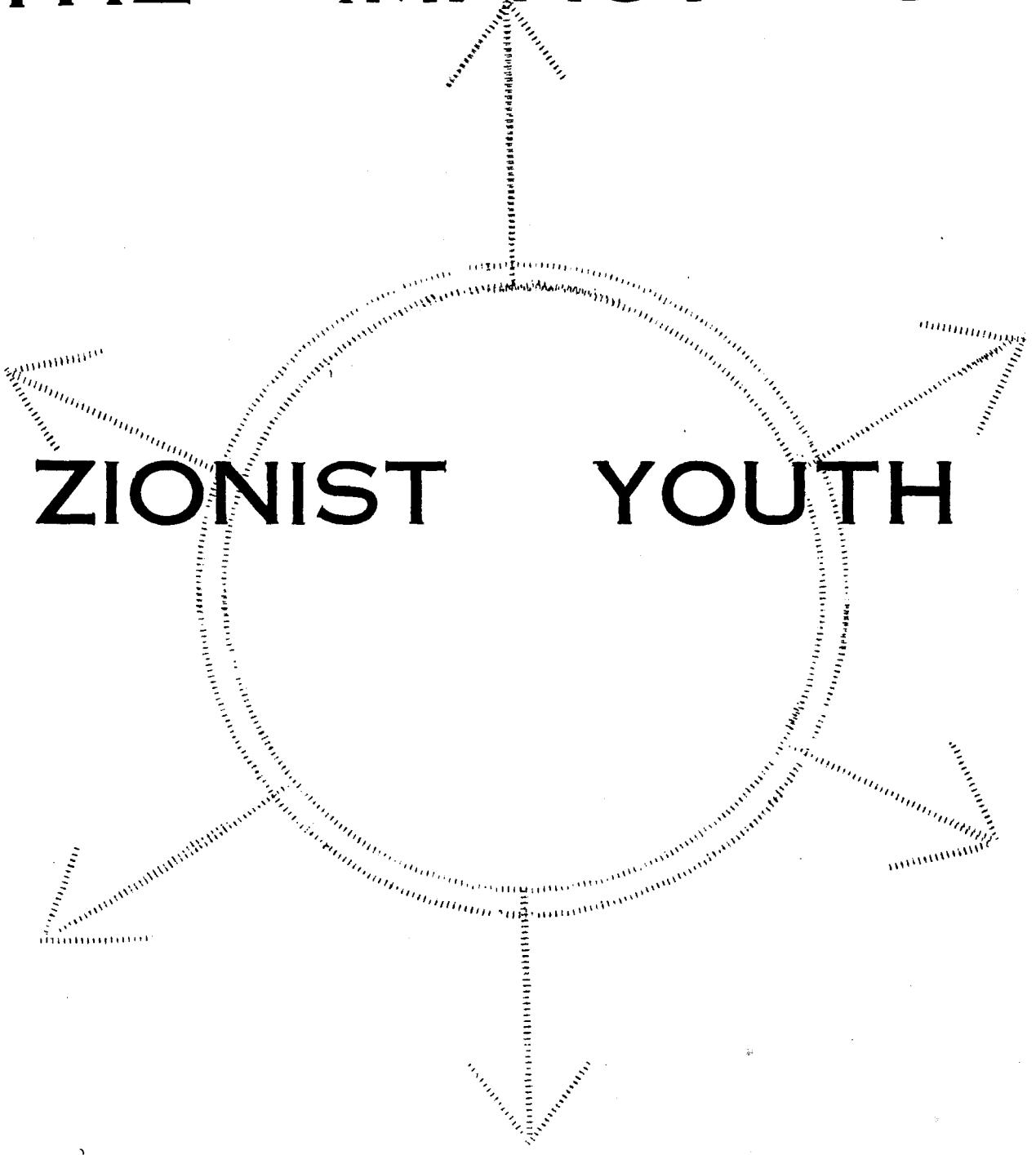


THE IMPACT OF



ZIONIST YOUTH

by Max Langer

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INTRODUCTION

The articles on the following pages represent perhaps the only recent comprehensive analysis of the prospects for the development of a Zionist youth movement with significant impact on the North American scene.

These essays were written by Max Langer during the period 1961-1963. They draw from his doctoral thesis (a group study of Habonim in Vancouver, British Columbia) and his experience working with Habonim in Vancouver, in Brooklyn, New York, on the Merkaz (National Executive Committee) of Habonim, and as Chairman of the American Zionist Youth Council. Slight revisions by the author are included.

Langer's basic contention in these essays is that "only an older, more committed Habonim can make the ideological impact on the American Jewish community and the contribution to the chalutzic enterprise in Israel that justify the existence of the movement." In particular, it is his feeling that "only a more mature Habonim can make an effective contribution to the eventual formation of a united Zionist youth movement whose nucleus will be the chalutzic core."

These articles were originally written to provoke thought and discussion. It is in this spirit and hope that they are collected herein.

Abba Caspi
Mazkir Habonim
September, 1965

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FAITH AND IDEOLOGY IN THE CHALUTZIC YOUTH MOVEMENTS

In this essay I wish to discuss some of the differences between the chalutzic Zionist youth movements and the American Jewish community in general, and its youth component in particular.

The relationship of the tiny group formed by the chalutzic Zionist youth movements to the larger American Jewish community is not (at least in hopeful theory) a passive one. We see ourselves as actively attempting to educate the Jewish community and particularly its youth component to our ways. Few of us are aware of the nature of the real difference between the chalutzic youth movement member and the average Jewish youth (or a member of any of the large Jewish youth organizations).

In such a brief discussion of our differences as this, it should be clearly understood that we can only present the extremes of certain tendencies. Many individuals in the chalutzic youth movements share the "non chalutzic" values of the majority subculture of American Jewish youth. Values as such are not measurable with mathematical exactness; therefore we are really comparing "value tendencies" in the chalutzic Zionist youth movements, the minority, with those of the American Jewish community, the majority. Naturally, any given individual will be affected in varying degrees by the values of his group. This is *not* a comparison of the values of "X," a movement chaver with the values of "Y," a non-movement Jewish youth in America; it is not to be expected that every individual will fit into the pattern. What is important is that an "ideal figure" of the chalutzic Zionist youth movements is being compared with the average or even the above average "ideal" Jewish youth in a general Jewish youth organization.

Ideology of Chalutzic Youth

Fundamentally, our values differ from that of the majority of the entire American Jewish community by virtue of our ideology, and it is well to recapitulate its salient features briefly.

As chalutzic Zionist youth, we believe in the centrality of the Jewish National Home in the lives of all Jews and in the history of

the Jewish people.

We believe that every Jew must strive for maximum self-realization in terms of his Jewishness wherever he may be. The chaver in a chalutzic youth movement is committed to ensuring the continuity of a culturally significant Jewish life whether he is in the *Golab* or in Israel. Indeed, the chaver is committed to constructive efforts on behalf of Jewish life in the *Golab* even if he personally believes there is no future for Jewish life in the *Golab*. However, the chalutzic Zionist youth movements are clear on a fundamental point. Full self-realization for a Jew can take place only in Israel. Full self-realization can never take place for a Jew living in the *Golab*—"in exile"; full self-realization can take place only through living as a chalutz* in the Jewish National Home. This means chalutzic-aliya.

Chalutzic aliya is thus the logical maximal demand that each chaver of a chalutzic Zionist youth movement must make of himself—it is not the only aim of our movement in terms of the individual, but it is the ideal aim.

Certainly the American Jewish community as a whole and even parts of the adult Zionist movement do not accept our ideological position on *Golab*, nor does the community at large. This alone is a significant difference between us and even those groups in American Jewry closest to us ideologically. However, this is not the fundamental ideological difference between the members of the chalutzic movements and the masses of American Jewish youth, including those in the more general youth organizations.

A basic difference between our chalutzic youth and American Jewish youth is that we have an ideology and they do not.

We are a committed, purposeful group; American Jewish youth as a whole is not.

Our ideological beliefs affect our day-to-day lives in terms of the meetings we go to, the people we come into contact with, the type of person we look up to, the things we talk about, and even the occupational choices we make.

Ideological beliefs do not play this role amongst American Jewish youth. Even those American Jewish youth affiliated with organizations are not as affected by them, or as committed to them as we are to our beliefs and our movement.

* It is not within the scope of this article to discuss "what is a chalutz?" Different chalutz movements see this differently, but the concept of service to the Jewish people in its National Home as personal self-fulfillment is common to all.

Faith: The Emotional Commitment

But it is not the fact that we are committed, in a formalistic way, to our ideology by virtue of the fact that we have signed our names to a membership card that is all-important. Many Jewish youth organizations have membership cards which many young Jewish people sign. We must go into the qualitative aspects of our commitment much further.

We, the chalutzic Zionist youth movements, have faith. Our chalutzic Zionist ideology is true faith by the standards of contemporary philosophy and theology.

In the words of Paul Tillich,* the existentialist theologian: "Faith is the state of being ultimately concerned." Matters of ultimate concern to an individual are his faith. Tillich distinguishes true faith from false faith. Those whose ultimate concern in life is material success or a career are concerned with something finite. True faith is concerned with infinite ends. A nation which becomes the ultimate concern is also a finite end. Nationalistic ecstasy can mimic religious experience but the finite ends of nationalism are not "truly ultimate."

It is the uniquely Jewish contribution to humanity that the nation is the collective instrument of a people to "ultimacy"—the Messianic vision of the golden age pronounced by our prophets over 2000 years ago.

Zionism is Judaism "on the march." Whether it is orthodox, conservative, or reform is a secondary matter. Thus the national aims of Judaism and its activist element, Zionism, are infinite and concerned with the fulfillment of the Messianic vision. I indicated what the aims were in the beginning parts of this essay. But this is only a description of true faith.

Tillich says: "What concerns one ultimately becomes holy—the feeling of being consumed is a profound expression of man's relation to the holy."

This expresses a complete emotional involvement in those things that are considered truly ultimate.

It is this emotional commitment and involvement in the ideals of a chalutzic youth movement which makes a personal imperative for chaverim to act in accordance with the ideals of their movement. Ideally, personal considerations such as career, family and even aliyah plans (commitment within commitment) become secondary to the chaver of a chalutzic Zionist youth movement seeking self-fulfillment

* Paul Tillich, "The Dynamics of Faith," N. Y. Harper Torchbooks, 1957.

in his Zionist faith.

We have chaverim who sign our membership cards because they give intellectual assent to our ideals very much as a member of a general Jewish youth organization. However, the iron test comes when to remain in the movement chaverim must undertake something that requires decisions in their personal lives which cannot be rationalized on any other grounds except that the success of the movement's ideals are matters of ultimate concern to them. Most Maapilim sooner or later come to this cross-road. Too few leaders in the chalutzic Zionist youth movements have real faith in the ideals of their movement.

The ideal chaver of the chalutzic Zionist youth movement is "consumed" in the pursuit of the "truly ultimate" ideals of Zionism. No such emotional commitment exists for most adult Zionists, members of general Jewish youth organizations and least of all for the mass of American Jewish youth.

An incident at one of the workshops of the Regional Jewish Youth Council last September remains vividly in my mind. Chaverim of the Zionist youth movements, especially the chalutzic Zionist youth movements were attempting to relate in some way to the non-Zionist Jewish youth organizations what they wanted from their members that was unique.

There seemed to be general agreement that both Zionists and non-Zionists wanted their members to have a Jewish education, to be moral and ethical, and to be concerned and attempt to do something about ensuring Jewish continuity in America. There was even agreement amongst all Jewish youth that we must build close ties with Israel and encourage visits to Israel. Even the idea of aliyah was partially acceptable to everyone. Chaverim of the chalutzic Zionist youth movement felt that something was being left unsaid. There was something that had to do with our ideals which was not expressed by the consensus of intellectual assent that seemed to be present.

Finally a young chavera from one of the chalutzic Zionist youth movements arose and, to the considerable discomfiture of the delegates of the general Jewish youth organizations, spoke for all of us when she said: "It's really very simple. We don't want so much from our members. All we want is their lives."

This is the nature of the commitment that chalutzic Zionist youth movements demand of their chaverim. It is the most important of our distinguishing characteristics.

From FURROWS, Volume XVI, Number 3, January-February 1961

Re-Zoned Youth

Movement in America

The following three essays: "The Political Nature of the Youth Movement," "Revolution for the Right," and "The New Left," are from the publication of Robert Rydell, "The New Left Movement in America," published by Writers' Workshop.

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various adult Zionist groups is also a possibility. Under the cover of the concept of "educational youth movement" all Zionist youth groups have in fact moved in *this direction to a considerable extent*. The classical "chalutzic" groups, in spite of their traditions of autonomy and political consciousness have also been moving steadily in the direction of a childrens organization for the past 15 years. This has had a negative effect not only on themselves but also on the "non-chalutzic" groups to which the former still serve as something of an ideal.

One often hears the excuse: "But we must educate the youngsters and concentrate on them because the American Jewish community simply is not doing it." I oppose this philosophy. A youth movement has not the resources of a community backed educational system. Our role here is political — to pressure the Zionist movement to launch a Zionist

oriented Hebrew Day school system which in turn will provide us with natural ground from which we can draw members.* There are money and resources in the American Jewish community — perhaps one of the major tasks of a politically active Zionist youth movement is to create the demand that they be mobilized properly.

The Younger Age Groups

The slogan, "educational youth movement" has become one of the rationales for the emphasis on the younger age groups. The relative success of Zionist youth groups with very young members is a mixed blessing. To a large extent

* It must be pointed out that Max has specifically exempted Camp Kvutza from this criticism. He sees a Camp Kvutza including Amelim and Chotrim as not incompatible with a k'en consisting mainly of Bonim and Maapilim. The camp would serve as a source of future Bonim and as a source of money for the movement. . . .

the best energies of Zionist youth leadership are dissipated in "baby sitting"; doing the job that the educational system of every Jewish community should be doing. It is often most difficult to program for older teenagers because all the leisure time of the best members is taken up leading older groups. I fully recognize that leadership of younger members is in itself a worthwhile and satisfying activity for the 15-17 year old, nor do I propose abandoning the 10-13 age groups. *However, I am concerned with the current emphasis on the very young to the exclusion of proper programming for the high school and college age groups.* The emphasis and concern with the younger age groups in even such a group as Habonim is such that if you are not a madrich (as a 16 year old) or directly involved in hadracha work if you are over 18, there is little place for you in the movement. . . .

*From the essay, THE ZIONIST YOUTH MOVEMENT IN AMERICA
and from FURROWS, Volume XIX, Number 2, November-December 1962*

I. The Political Nature of the Youth Movement

... At the outset of this essay, I implied that what would chiefly concern us was the question of a Zionist youth movement of some influence and effectiveness within the political and social entity known as the American Jewish community. Such a Zionist youth movement might also be expected to make an impact on the emergent Jewish National Home in Israel. Such a movement does not in fact exist in the America of today. This is the chief and decisive failure of American Zionist youth groups.

... If one attempted to make a three line analysis of what the Zionist youth "movement" today is, we would see that basically the Zionist youth groups seem to exist for the purpose of educating their members to become leaders and to go on a Year Course or Workshop to Israel so that they can come back to educate more members to become leaders to go to Israel and these too then return to carry on this cycle. Each year this tight little circle produces 60 to 70 olim for Israel, and presumably, if we were to double the size of the Zionist youth groups this number of olim would also double. Is this enough? Is this a Zionist youth movement?

Thus we come to the central question. Why are the Zionist youth groups unable to transcend their day-to-day problems of existence and continuity? Why do they remain, on the whole, non-perpetrative, "non-doing" groups in both the American Jewish community and in Israel? Why is the effect of the mere existence of the Zionist youth groups felt, in general, only by their members and to a significant degree by only a minority of their members at that?

The immediate answer to these

questions is that the Zionist youth groups simply do not see themselves within a frame of reference in which it is their task to influence an American Jewish social order by group action. By and large, the perspectives of the Zionist youth groups are limited to the daily problems of their organizational perpetuation. These problems are exacerbated by the low age level in the groups. However, the real question is: Why does the situation remain as such? To fully grasp why this is so, it is necessary to understand that the leadership of the Zionist youth groups is hampered by a number of false images which it has come to accept with regard to the nature of a Zionist youth group.

"The Educational Youth Movement"

Perhaps no self-image has had a more damaging effect on the Zionist youth groups than the image they have built of themselves as an "educational youth movement." The word "movement" in the context of educational youth movement has become quite meaningless — all that is really meant is that individuals are being educated to have a certain individual response to problems of Jewish identity. These responses range from giving serious consideration to your Jewish education and Hebrew background, to varying degrees of identification with Israel including Aliya. There is today a definite trend to a general ideological convergence among the major Zionist youth groups, and nowhere is this more apparent than in their self-image as the educational youth movement creating some kind of liberal-Jewish-Zionist personality type.

Movement implies social change. The Zionist youth groups are primarily concerned with changing individuals. Admittedly, this is a prerequisite to social change, and let no one construe that I am denying that the individual within the group has to be educated. But more is involved than just creating a general personality type with a "positive" Jewish outlook or even an individual that will live on the kibbutz. A movement has to mobilize effectively the personality type it creates to change the social order to which that movement relates. A movement has to see itself as affecting the affairs of man. Those who actively concern themselves with the affairs of man are concerned with politics. In other words, a movement is a *political entity*. Of course a political entity in this sense by no means implies affiliation with a political party. Such an affiliation may or may not be part of the movement.

As a movement, Zionism has been the decisive force in the affairs of Jewry for the past 60 years and the Zionist youth movements of Eastern Europe were instrumental in shaping the contemporary social structure of Israel. To speak of a non-political Zionist youth movement (a term sometimes employed by SZO and Young Judaea) is a contradiction in terms — no movement is non-political, certainly not a Zionist youth movement. To speak of a Zionist youth movement as a political movement which uses education as one of its chief *techniques* is valid and this was in fact the sense in which the term "educational youth movement" was first used.

Of course, a non-political childrens organization sponsored by

II. CRITERIA FOR THE CHALUTZ MOVEMENTS

In their drift towards becoming children's organizations there is really not so much differentiating the chalutzic zionist youth movements from the other Zionist youth groups; there is a general ideological convergence among all the Zionist youth groups. In the more distant future there looms the additional prospect that there will not be much difference between the Jewish youth organizations in general and Zionist youth groups. Indeed, some people speak (and act) as if this were already the case. The immediate need would seem to be for the chalutzic youth groups to set an example to measure up to new criteria. It is quite impossible to discuss the issue of Zionist youth in America without making at least an initial attempt to set forth such criteria — criteria that can at least form the basis for future discussion.

In addition I do not believe that the chalutzic groups will be able to attract or hold the college youth of today without offering some coherent ideology that is seen as relevant to today's problems by campus youth. We need an intellectually defensible stance. Otherwise the present situation will continue — tight in-groups of post Year Course cliques held together on a chevra basis rather than on an intellectual one, and Zionist youth groups run largely by shlichim and professionals. Even when Aliya-oriented such cliques do not, in my opinion, serve the purpose of chalutzic-Zionism.

I have chosen six criteria that a chalutzic Zionist youth movement in North America today should meet. Many organizations, chalutzic and non-chalutzic — even Zionist and non-Zionist — can meet some of these criteria. None can meet all.

Criterion One: Exile

The acceptance of the concept of exile is a criterion of a Zionism as a whole, let alone of chalutzic Zionism. However, I do not mean by this the mere fact that all Jews outside the Jewish National Home are in Exile. Rather, I accept the interpretation of Ben Halpern who sees Jewish Exile from the National Home as a symptom of Universal disorder and injustice. In addition, Exile is a moral concept as well as a geographical one — to the extent that social injustice or universal disorder exists, that too is "Exile." To the extent that social imperfection and disorder exist in Israel — Israel too is Exile.

The task of mankind is seen as reducing social disorder and injustice everywhere. The Jewish people must also participate in this fight everywhere — this includes America and very definitely the American Jewish community. But the primary task of the Jewish people is the perfection of the Jewish National Home in the spirit of the prophets to "serve as a light unto the nations." As this involves conscious and premeditated efforts to influence the affairs of humanity (particularly its Jewish segment) this task is a political task.

The point about perfection of humanity in general, and the particular task of the Jewish people with regard to the perfection of the Jewish National Home is, of course, not finite — it is a messianic hope. On Passover Eve, Jews everywhere say "Next year in Jerusalem." However, those already in Jerusalem say: "Next year in a better Jerusalem." There will always be room for improvement.

It is within this philosophical framework that the chalutzic movement must view all institutions and even its own creations which happen to exist at the moment e.g. Kibbutzim, Moshavim, and the Histadrut. At the same time the chalutzic movement has a philosophic basis for activity in the Diaspora in general. On the other hand, the chief task of the Zionist movement in the Diaspora is to create that kind of Aliya (reduction of physical Exile) that will effectively play a part in the perfection of the Jewish National Home (reduction of moral Exile).

Criterion Two: Belief and Action

Whatever may be the case with the adult Zionist movement in America, the chalutzic Zionist youth movement must continue to express in its daily activities and long-range aims, that prophetic feature of Judaism — unity of belief and action. The chalutzic youth movement must do more than have an ideology — it must act in accordance with its beliefs. Such action should express itself in at least three ways.

Firstly, there must be individual self-realization — the highest aim for an individual must be personal participation in the perfection of the Jewish National Home.

Secondly, the movement must effectively relate to a program of action in its part of the Diaspora that can be seen to be reducing social disorder in general and Jewish exile in particular. What such a program would be would vary greatly from center to center and there would be differences between local and national action. Thus picketing in Baltimore against segregation, pressuring for Jewish

educational facilities with higher standards, Chanuka parades down a main street can all fit into the picture. Unfortunately very few of these things are being done by the Zionist youth groups today. Furthermore, action is usually taken in isolated instances but seldom is there a consistent policy.

Thirdly, the unity of belief and action must express itself in the daily lives and actions of the teen-age members of the chalutzic Zionist youth group. In America, teen-age life is often seen as a ritualistic game without any serious or purposeful content. I am not suggesting that our chalutzic youth groups should be colorless collections of deadly serious individuals pursuing their ends with fanatic zeal. Nevertheless, I do feel that social relationships and social life among movement members should be qualitatively different from that of the average American Jewish teen-ager because of the live ideological bonds binding members together. Obviously the older leadership must continuously set the example for the younger leadership in this matter.

Fourthly, unity of belief and action must be reflected in the internal conduct of the movement. A chalutzic youth movement sees itself as an instrument of continual change towards a state of messianic perfection. Therefore, it must not be afraid to continually re-examine itself and modify its outlook, for it must be assumed that the instrument for achieving perfection can also be perfected further. In my view, those "chalutzic" movements that do not permit themselves to question and if necessary change their methods and traditions, their goals and their outlook make a mockery out of the very term "chalutzic."

Criterion Three: Aliya Ideology

It is hardly enough in the chalutzic Zionist youth movement

today to merely insist on Aliya — especially when one keeps in mind that every Zionist youth group today favours Aliya. On top of that, no Zionist youth group opposes chalutzic Aliya in the classical sense of the word (Aliya to a kibbutz). Many members of groups such as Young Judaea see themselves as coming to Israel to work professionally in development areas. Many times I have been asked by Young Judaeans, "If I want to go to the Negev to be an engineer am I less of a chalutzdele than you?" The easy answer is that what you call it is not important—just do it. In general, the trend to this type of thinking is a most heartening development in the Zionist youth groups for it presages the possibility of a real increase in American Aliya — Aliya at least nominally Zionist during the next 5 to 10 years. What then will remain as the distinguishing characteristic of chalutzic Aliya?

Firstly, I believe that it is incorrect to state that "Aliya is the aim of chalutzic Zionism." Rather, the aim of chalutzic Zionism must be towards a maximal Zionist commitment to the fight against Exile in all its forms. An incident in, and a natural result of, this Zionist commitment is Aliya. I know many people in America, even some who are still nominal members of chalutzic Zionist youth groups, who have made a positive Aliya decision but who are doing absolutely nothing for the cause of Zionism (inside or outside the framework of a Zionist youth group) as they complete their studies. Nor is there any reason to believe that these people will suddenly become actively interested in public affairs when they come to Israel — even if they go to a Kibbutz. I do not mean to criticise such people — after all if they are going on Aliya they are among an infinitely small minority. However, I do criticise the

term "chalutzic Aliya" being applied to these people. In addition, I am prepared to concede that real chalutzic Aliya from America may in the future be only a small percent of the total American Aliya.

Aliya must therefore be seen as the most powerful political instrument in the hands of the chalutzic Zionist youth group in its efforts to participate actively in perfecting the Jewish National Home.

However, if Aliya has this political function as well as its primary philosophical one, then the form of that Aliya must be such that it can be mobilized for political purposes. This means that a significant proportion of Aliya must take place within groups for groups in general can make an impact far more effectively than single individuals. These groups, in some way must continue to maintain a Zionist identity in Israel. It is here that the Hityashvut and the Kibbutz in particular, have an important role to play for some of the members of the settlements can always be mobilized for movement work and the settlements themselves can have a direct relationship with the American Zionist youth movement.

But Aliya in the chalutzic youth groups cannot be a mere matter of recruiting additional settlers for the Hityashvut — even for the American settlements that already exist. The American settlements often have their own problems of perpetuation and existence and insofar as they are Mifalim (projects) of specific American chalutzic groups that too is a problem of those groups. Competition between settlements results in groups too small, groups that are not viable. When these groups disintegrate the settlement thus loses out and a very negative impact is made on the group in America. At this stage it is my opinion that in the case

of chalutzic groups, Garinim should be oriented to one given settlement until a Hashlama (settlement group) of forty to fifty people can be built up.

Furthermore, groups intending to have an impact on Israel to engage in social pioneering, must take into consideration all parts of the Jewish National Home — Kibbutzim, Moshavim, development areas and even cities. It seems to me that another challenge to chalutziut today is to develop forms of social pioneering relevant to some of the new types of society being created in Israel today.

Criterion Four: The Movement as Political and Evolutionary-Revolutionary

Any movement which involves itself in the affairs of man to the extent that a chalutzic movement does, if it wishes to have an effect on society, is political. I have made this point in the discussion of the false image of the "educational youth movement."

The chalutzic youth movement must also be evolutionary and revolutionary. It must be evolutionary in that it presents a certain ideal picture of the evolution of its ideal figure—e.g., a chaver joins at a young age, gradually learns about Israel and Zionism, attends a year course, returns to lead his group, becomes increasingly committed and eventually makes Aliya—let us say within the framework of a Garin to a Kibbutz. This has been an evolutionary process.

On the other hand, when this evolutionary process is compared to the normative evolutionary process of American Jewish youth it will be seen that the movement is revolutionary.

The chalutzic youth group is also revolutionary in another way, for to achieve the messianic aim of perfection requires continual change within society. Such continual change is revolutionary. (I

do not subscribe to those dialectical definitions which hold that social revolutions must be accomplished in a single, possibly even violent moment.)

Autonomy

To function effectively and freely in terms of being a political movement the chalutzic Zionist youth movement must be autonomous. A Zionist youth movement must be responsible to its own membership—not to an adult Zionist group or party. Nor can a Zionist youth movement be so structured that it is dependent, indeed virtually a prisoner of the political party alignment in Israel. Only a movement autonomous of what we shall call the Zionist bureaucracy can freely make a maximal impact both in America and in Israel.

But autonomy is not an end in itself. Autonomy is only a requirement—albeit an essential one—for full freedom in acts of "doing." Autonomy is seldom granted outright. Autonomy must be struggled for and the limits to the autonomy of a movement must constantly be probed and extended. A youth movement must continuously and consciously engage in the exercise of its autonomy. In particular, only by continuous meaningful political activity can a Zionist youth movement maintain itself against the sheer inertia of the American Jewish community on the one hand and the trend to domination by professionals and shlichim on the other hand. There is no such thing as a political vacuum and if the Zionist youth groups do not choose to continually exercise their political prerogatives to the limit, others will emerge, consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly to do it for them.

In my opinion, there is one very good test of the degree of autonomy that is present in a movement. The test is: "To what extent does the group have control

over its own finances—nationally and locally." No American Zionist youth group is truly autonomous in this sense at present. The range of possible political action is at present limited in the case of every group by its sources of financial support.

Criterion Five: The Potential for Non-Bureaucratic Behavior

It has become almost a truism that the revolutionary innovations and movements of yesterday have become the routinized bureaucracies of today. The term "bureaucracy" is not being used depreciatingly. Rather, it refers to a framework within which official business is conducted on a continuing basis. There is an assumption of a relatively constant set of tasks to be fulfilled. The duties of officials are determined by the impersonal criteria of the task to be fulfilled. The man is fitted to the job for it is the latter which must be continued. (In the movement the tafkidim are more often defined by the abilities of the various chaverim available.)

To the extent that a movement becomes bureaucratized it becomes a vehicle for the perpetuation of what has already been achieved rather than means for the innovation of something new. But the issue in the chalutzic Zionist youth movement is not routinization vs. innovation. The bureaucracy is vital to maintain continuity. The question is *does the movement retain the potential for major innovations?* The question of autonomy (Criterion Four) becomes central in this matter as well.

There are more subtle indications of degree of bureaucratization. How is the problem of dissent handled internally? In my opinion, in the movement the issue as such becomes crystallized, must be debated and some kind of decision must be reached—nor can the feelings of a significant minority be trampled on lightly by a

majority. A bureaucracy with its well-defined order and "constitutional procedure" will often attempt to control dissent on technical or procedural grounds. Indeed, the central authority may decide what is an issue and what is not. Thus a given issue may never be discussed. The rules of procedure take precedence over the feelings of members. Again, this is not to say that a movement must dispense with orderly procedure. However, the latter cannot become the sole criterion for deciding what is to be discussed, by whom, and where. I must make it clear that by "orderly procedure" I do not refer to the question of whether parliamentary procedure is or is not used at a given meeting. I refer to the question of how issues are handled and recognized and how those in authority relate to the problem of dissent from "established procedure."

Finally (perhaps most important of all), the overly bureaucratized movement has generally lost its ability to hold or is unwilling to accept a dynamic leadership of innovation. The bureaucracy will prefer a leadership of perpetuation that will not "endanger" what has already been achieved. The bureaucracy will tend to believe that

these two types of leadership are mutually exclusive.

It must be clearly understood that I am *not* saying that "bureaucratic features" must be eliminated from the chalutzic groups for them to measure up to what I consider to be criteria for an American chalutzic movement. Bureaucratic features are in and of themselves not negative. It is the *absence of the potential for non-bureaucratic behavior* that is the problem, in the chalutzic youth movement today. As Judd Teller told the Washington V'ida in discussing the problems of Zionism in general: "The revolution must be rescued from the bureaucracy."

Criterion Six: Commitment and Faith

Without the active commitment of its members and their faith in its ideals the first five criteria remain meaningless words. I have already said that by commitment I meant Zionist commitment rather than mere Aliya commitment. Such a commitment cannot be honestly given without faith in the ideals of the movement.

Such faith must be present at least in the top leadership of a chalutzic Zionist youth movement and it is this quality which at

times in the past has made the Zionist youth movement "a religious movement *sui generis*." This implies that the Zionist youth movement is a matter of what Paul Tillich has called "ultimate concern" at least in the lives of the movements' leadership. Because of the nature of its messianic ideal—ultimately the creation of a "perfect" social order, the chalutzic Zionist youth movement has the moral right to demand complete commitment at least from its leadership.

There is some question as to whether the average Zionist youth leader between ages 18 and 21 is ready to be committed. The fact that movements have increasingly found it necessary to insist on signed commitments from people they send to year courses does not inspire one with regard to the degree of commitment present in chalutzic Zionist youth groups in North America today.

We have emphasized that the idea of chalutziut was and is the creation of a society of social pioneering in Israel—only thus will the Jewish state fulfill its historic mission. Only thus is it seen as becoming the true spiritual and cultural center of the Jewish people and only thus can it make an impact on the Diaspora and the world.

From the essay, THE ZIONIST YOUTH MOVEMENT IN AMERICA and from FURROWS, Volume XIX, Number 4, March-April 1963 and Volume XIX, Number 5, May-June 1963

III. THE DEPOLITICIZATION OF ZIONIST YOUTH

None of the Zionist youth groups fully fits the criteria that I have set out for a Zionist youth movement, although some are undoubtedly closer to doing so than others. But simply to blame the adult Zionist movement, the kibbutzim or the professionals and the shlichim for this state of affairs is hardly just, although there is no question that part of the problem lies at this level.

The core of the problem would seem to be that the leadership of the Zionist youth groups does not see itself as a political entity in the sense that I have used the term and does not even dream of trying to change matters. I have already implied that the more autonomous groups do not even seek to exercise the autonomy and political prerogatives they already possess. Not having a political program, there is really very little for the Zionist youth leadership to do but to concern itself with the bare problems of perpetuation of what may come to be mere children's organizations, be they American or Israeli,¹⁸ sponsorship.

It is to a further discussion of factors tending to de-politicize the Zionist youth groups that we must now turn.

The Problem of Adolescence

It is my belief that one of the major roots of the aimlessness of the Zionist youth groups lies in certain changes in the process of adolescence that have taken place during the past generation, which are perceptible throughout America but which find heightened expression within the youth of the Jewish community in general and its Zionist youth leadership in particular. Central to an understanding of these changes is some concept of what we actually mean by the terms "adolescence" and "youth movement."

Adolescence is commonly seen as the transition state between puberty and maturity. However, it has been clearly understood since the work of the American cultural anthropologists such as Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead that "maturity" in this sense does not mean physiological maturity - the mere biological ability to procreate. Maturity means the full attainment of adult status in terms of the individual's self-image and in terms of the acceptance of this self-image by the surrounding society. This includes as a corollary the legitimate exercise of hetero-sexual relations. Thus adolescence is primarily a psychological and cultural phenomenon.

It is a characteristic of Western society in general that this period of psychological and social adolescence is an unusually long one and the trend for the upper middle class in America - particularly Jews - has been to lengthen this period of time even further by graduate and post-graduate education. Thus, in a sense, full adult status is not attained especially by males until the mid-twenties.

Increasingly, American Jewish youth is undergoing a moratorium on psychological and social development while at college - this period of time can be viewed as a kind of extended adolescence.

Erik H. Erikson* has summarized the "nuclear conflict" in the psycho-social development of adolescence in any society. First there must develop harmony between what the adolescent thinks and feels about himself and between what he thinks others think about him. Secondly, the adolescent must come to see himself in relation to a "life plan" and the successful assumption of adult status. A healthy developmental resolution of these adolescent problems results in the attainment of ego identity.

* Erik H. Erikson, Childhood and Society, New York, W.W. Norton, 1950.

The reverse of ego identity is seen by Erikson as role diffusion and Erikson here takes the example of Biff Loman in Miller's "Death of a Salesman" to illustrate his point. "I can't take hold Mom, I just can't take hold ^{of} some kind of life." In essence, the adolescent (and we are speaking now of the undergraduate Jewish college student) is grappling with the problem - not necessarily consciously - of what kind of life he wants to lead. It is the first two or three years at college which at present seem to be the "age of decision" among Jewish college youth, although many still grapple with it well into their graduate years.

Eisenstadt* has shown that the concept of a youth movement has been possible only within Western society with its extended period of adolescence. Basically, a youth movement is an adolescent phenomenon which arises in response to a situation where youth cannot attain a meaningful (to them) ego identity within the context of a given society. As a social force, the youth movement ultimately seeks to change its society, so that ego identity of the type envisioned as ideal by the movement can be achieved. In the first two decades of this century, the classic prototype of a youth movement, the German Wandervogel, arose in the face of the frustration of German youth in finding a place for themselves in the rigid social order of post-Bismarckian Germany. But the Wandervogel program of romanticizing nature and simple living never was translated into anything politically lasting - it had no essential basis except the glorification of adolescent personality into a permanent ego identity.

The Zionist youth movement that arose chiefly in Poland between the wars was probably the best example of a successful youth movement. In a large measure the forms of this movement took their inspiration from the German Wandervogel. The Polish Zionist youth movement also drew on a youth for whom there was no place, no life "to take hold of" and thus no meaningful ego identity. But the crucial thing about this youth movement was that it chose an identity, an ego-ideal - chalutziut - which could and did achieve political form and significance in Palestine.

It was in the nature of the political situation created by the British Mandatory power with its restrictive immigration policy, that there was always an older leadership within this movement which had already consciously chosen the identity "chalutz." This was also the situation within the small chalutzic movement in America that existed during the Thirties and the Forties. It was also within the nature of the limited opportunities available in Eastern Europe, economically and academically, that adolescence terminated in the late teens. At this time Jewish youth was considered to be mature enough to make a life-decision on the matter of chalutziut.

Even in America twenty years ago, the political and social climate engendered first by the depression and then by the War made it normative among certain elements of Jewish youth to commit themselves and to identify unreservedly within the framework of a youth movement to certain ideals. It is my impression that there was also a qualitative difference in the nature of the college attendance on the part of Jewish youth in general and Zionist youth in particular. College education was to a much larger degree concerned with climbing the socio-economic ladder than it is today for Jewish youth in general. For the Zionist youth leadership, college was either a matter of vocational training or a supplementary activity to broaden one's background - the Zionist youth movement was primary and the leadership's identification was ^{with} the movement and the life of chalutziut.

But today it is an identifying characteristic of a very large proportion of Jewish youth on the campus that they are there merely to fulfill the expectations of Jewish society. The children of the parents who successfully climbed the socio-economic ladder are motivated not by economic necessity but by social expectations. Thus, college is a matter of status rather than education. The typical undergraduate reaction to what he is doing on the campus is, "I'm taking a course," and truly, just about any course will do. It is a particular feature of Zionist youth on campus, including

*S.N. Eisenstadt, From Generation to Generation, Glencoe, The Free Press, 1956.
12.

the Zionist youth leadership, that even more than other Jewish youth it is uncertain why it is on the campus. Indeed, Zionist youth leaders are often driven to excel academically to compensate for their involvement in an enterprise in which they by no means have complete faith, and which is questioned by their peers and American Jewish society. Zionist youth leadership is often quite ambivalent with regard to its Zionist commitment - it does not really identify itself with that commitment.

As I have noted, 95% of Zionist youth leadership is at the undergraduate level. Although most of them have been to Israel for a year, this experience has by no means resulted in the crystallization of a positive identity with a set of ideals. Many have made an aliya decision but many have not. Very few have made a decision as to the kind of life they wish to lead, either in Israel or America. In short, the majority of the Zionist youth leadership are very much concerned in their personal lives with the central problems of adolescence that we discussed under the term ego identity.

Lacking certainty in their identity, the majority of Zionist youth leadership is hardly in a psychological condition to lead anyone but younger children. At best, they perform barely adequately to perpetuate groups the relation of which to their personal lives is often very unclear to them. One can hardly expect such leadership to think politically or to attempt to shape the American Jewish community and/or Israel in line with identifications they personally have not yet made. This also explains much of the introvertedness of the Zionist youth leadership as a group, even though from an individual point of view they are not necessarily introverted in the psychological sense. If Zionist youth leadership lacks certainty as to its identity, this leadership is hardly likely to publicize its psychological confusion by attempting to reach out to the majority of Jewish youth secure in its pursuit of the good material life. Consciously and unconsciously Zionist youth retreats into cliques, tight in-groups based on year-courses in Israel, and proceeds to mark time, half-heartedly perpetuating the youth group, waiting for the time to go on Aliya.

Let the reader recall that when I speak of Zionist youth leadership of college age (and there is really little significant leadership possible in a Zionist youth movement under the age of 18) I refer to in toto the 300-400 odd members in all the Zionist youth groups taken together who can be said to be in any way committed. It must be recalled again that this leadership is distributed among ten different Zionist youth groups, the largest of which is not even allowed to officially have members over the age of 18. Thus, the seriousness of the situation can readily be seen. And if over 90% of this "leadership" is in its undergraduate years, the years when many of the conflicts of adolescence are taking place in Jewish campus society, that leaves us with a handful, in fact less than a score, of people in their mid-twenties and of a post-graduate level of education in the Zionist youth movement (if it can be said to exist) of North America today.

The development of a politically-oriented Zionist youth movement in America today depends on a leadership whose average age is 23-27 rather than 17-21. For all practical purposes, at present no such leadership exists.

The Role of the Year Courses

I noted earlier that some 80% of Zionist youth leaders have spent a year in Israel - generally upon High School graduation. It is my personal opinion that age 18 is too young for the average Zionist youth group member to be sent to Israel if the purpose of his going is seen to be to facilitate a psycho-social identification that can lead to the development of an effective political youth movement. The attempt to induce identity-formation at too early an age is, in my opinion, responsible for much of the psychological confusion within the Zionist youth leadership. The first two years of college are so general and non-specific that it would seem to me that the age of 20 would be an equally practical "break." Girls might possibly be sent a year earlier

but they too should have a year of college. But if 18 is too young to go on a year-in-Israel course, the practice of sending 17 and 16-year olds must be doubly condemned.

Of course in a group such as Young Judaea, with its age limit of 18, the debate is a rather academic one at present. But in the case of a movement such as Habonim and its Workshop (the pioneering venture in the field of year courses) one must be a little more critical. The fact that a youngster graduated high school at 16 or 17 does not mean he is psychologically or socially prepared for an experience intended to commit him or her to chalutziut in terms of my criteria.

If one accepts the thesis that I have presented, then the Workshop is indeed full of contradictions. Chaverim are expected to make a "chalutz decision" and commit themselves to the movement on the basis of this experience, but how can they if they have not yet reached the stage where they are capable of making commitments and decisions? It has been suggested that the Workshop is a substitute for Hachshara. But Hachshara implies a decision by the individual to train for a particular way of life. How can the Workshop be hachshara if that decision has not been made? Indeed, as has been suggested by Adam Ben Chanoch recently* the Workshop is mainly a period of time where one gets to know oneself, and work out problems of relating oneself to a group. One is so overwhelmed by the sudden personal problems that have to be confronted that much of the value of the Israel experience is lost.

Strong efforts must be made by the chalutzic groups to increase the average age of their Workshops. Such chaverim will then have at least some of their adolescent conflicts and problems under control, and in addition they will have the intellectual background of a year or so at university. (It is to be emphasized that the first two years of college in America are sometimes considered merely the equivalent of Gr. 12 in Israel.)

The question may be raised, "But can we hold our membership, if they don't go on Workshop right after grade 12?" My answer is: yes - if there is a meaningful political program. The principal factors keeping the leadership together today in spite of the absence of such a program are the loyalties engendered by the common group experience - i.e., the "chevra". This may be adequate for the high-school-age group within the Zionist youth groups, but it is hardly an intellectual basis for adherence to an ideology by a college-age group. The continuation of adolescent motivation for Zionist youth group membership in college confirms the presence of the psycho-social moratorium I mentioned previously.

Chalutzic groups must keep one other point in mind with regard to their year courses. These courses should be bringing groups of American chalutzic youth into living contact with examples of revolutionary society in action. This is the justification for basing such groups largely on the kibbutz. However, if the group that is being brought into contact with the revolutionary society has not got the background - socially, psychologically, intellectually - to evaluate the way of life objectively, then the chalutzic movements are wasting their time sending such groups. Indeed, it can be a negative factor because all the petty aspects of kibbutz life will be magnified out of all proportion to the youngster who is himself going through all kinds of adjustments and crises.

Of course, the type of year course that is in fact geared to adolescents and merely seeks to familiarize them with the country and which has a large block of time for purely academic work, including leadership training, is another question. Even here, it seems to me that one year of college makes a great deal of difference in the amount that participants could get out of these courses.

* Adam Ben Chanoch, "Israel and Aliya," Binyan, Ichud Habonim, Tel Aviv, January, 1962.

The American Political Climate

To a significant extent, the inability of Zionist youth leadership to act effectively, to act politically, is a symptom of a psycho-social moratorium and of the uncertain personal identifications within which a majority of this leadership finds itself between the ages of 18 and 21.

The contemporary Zionist youth leadership has additional difficulties to cope with as well if it wishes to become a political movement, one of these being the current American political climate.

In contrast to the campus world of today, it is important to note that the Zionist youth leadership of the late Thirties and early Forties were part of the world of the "isms". At university numerous radical groups flourished. There was a conscious sense of searching for a meaningful way of life. For Jewish youth especially, the domestic economic crisis was reinforced by cataclysmic events on the international scene with profound repercussions on World Jewry. Identification with a group advocating radical social action was normative among certain elements of Jewish youth. Those that had a positive Jewish identification were the source-material for the Zionist youth movement. Large proportions of the leadership of groups such as Habonim, Bnei Akiva and Hashomer Hatzair did not "grow up" in the movement - they joined it as part of their campus experience within the context of this general political climate.

The political and social climate of America has, however, changed, and nowhere is this more apparent (despite the political involvement of a very small minority), than on the campus. A feeling of individual political powerlessness in the face of national and international issues too overwhelming to be grasped pervades all. C. Wright Mills in his The Power Elite* has painstakingly documented the trend in America away from an informed public in meaningful communication with its elected representatives who in turn have some control of the executive arm. Instead he sees arising a mass society which elects a legislative branch of the government whose members more or less stalemate each other, thus leaving room at the top for the emergence of a power elite composed of the top military, economic and political directorate whose actions cannot be effectively controlled from any point within the public.

It is within an emergent mass society that phenomena such as McCarthyism can come to flourish, but these are mere symptoms, not causes of the basic depoliticization of American public life. Political reality has come to be defined not by diplomats and politicians but by the military and big business, and only they qualify as experts. The quality of experience has come to be defined not by the individual's searching for a way of life but by the images of successful Americana created by the mass media. Ultimately these images represent the successful accumulation of cash.

Zionist youth as well has become affected in its world outlook by this trend - a particular expression of the contemporary political sociology of America. But what is equally serious is that thus preconditioned by the general climate, the leadership of the Zionist youth groups also abdicates from an organized political effort within the American Jewish community and within the Zionist movement.

"We do not really have a chance - the matter is out of our hands." This is the attitude of Zionist youth leadership to political action within its immediate social and political environment - the world of the local Jewish community, and in particular the adult American Zionist movement.

On a national level, in matters affecting Zionist youth, things do indeed remain in the hands of the adult Zionist movement, or rather the Zionist bureaucracy represented

* C. Wright Mills, The Power Elite, New York, Basic Books, 1956.

by the American Zionist Council and the American Zionist Youth Foundation in America and the Jewish Agency in Israel. It is to this aspect of the problems of Zionist youth leadership that now turn.

The Zionist Bureaucracy

There exists today a network of agencies, councils and departments subject to the authority of the Jewish Agency and the World Zionist Organization in Israel on the one hand, and to the American Zionist Council in America on the other hand. This network is the Zionist bureaucracy. That aspect of the Zionist bureaucracy which relates to youth work is primarily organized through the American Zionist Youth Foundation and the Youth and Hechalutz Department of the Jewish Agency.

The Jewish Agency's Youth and Hechalutz Department

The Youth and Hechalutz Department of the Jewish Agency plays an important role vis-a-vis the American Zionist youth groups. To a large extent the number of subsidized shlichim assigned to each group depends on the Jewish Agency. It is through the Jewish Agency that much of the financing of the Israel programs of the various groups is done. Three observations might be made with regard to the Youth and Hechalutz Department.

First, as a bureaucratic entity, it represents largely those forces which see the Zionist youth groups in America as children's organizations to recruit settlers for Israel. In particular, the "chalutzic" groups are seen as the children's organizations for the support of the various kibbutz federations. It is on this value basis that financially subsidized shlichim are apportioned. Secondly, the American experience of the Zionist youth groups is the furthest removed from that of Eastern Europe (or even from that of Western Europe and Latin America today) and this has resulted in the problems of American Zionist youth groups being less well understood than those of other countries in the Diaspora. Finally, because the American Zionist youth groups and their graduates in Israel are a relatively small group and poorly organized at that, it is most difficult for American Zionist youth groups to make their wants effectively known. Today, however, the Youth and Hechalutz Department no longer plays the central role it once did; along with many other functions of the Jewish Agency, youth work has come increasingly under the aegis of the American Zionist Youth Foundation.

The American Zionist Youth Foundation

The Youth Foundation has two primary areas of function. One area has to do with the propagation of Israel-oriented programs and "Israel consciousness" among Jewish youth in America in general. The Youth Foundation does not do this directly, but principally by means of contacts, formal and informal, with the professional staffs of general Jewish youth organizations. Modest success has been achieved in this area. The resources of the Youth Foundation are utilized to a considerable extent by general Jewish youth organizations such as the B'nai Brith Youth Organization and the various synagogue groups in order to bring Israel into their programs. Indeed, not only is the Youth Foundation concerned with the image of Israel in the eyes of Jewish youth, but also the Youth Foundation attempts to provide knowledge about matters pertaining to Israel to selected groups of high school educators in the hope that non-Jewish youth will also learn about the Jewish state.

The other major area of Youth Foundation function has to do with the servicing of the Zionist youth groups* are partially determined by and channeled through the Youth Foundation. These allotments form the largest single source of income for many Zionist youth groups and a major source of income for almost all. Secondly, the Student Zionist Organization is run by the Youth Foundation. It is thus important to examine

*To begin with, financial allotments to the Zionist youth groups

the relation of the Zionist youth groups to the Youth Foundation in some detail, for this part of the Zionist bureaucracy is the polity most closely related to the Zionist youth groups. We might expect that a politically conscious Zionist youth movement would exert a powerful influence within the Zionist bureaucracy and in particular within its Youth Foundation. Certainly on a national level we might expect political action to manifest itself in relations with the Youth Foundation in particular, and all other facets of the Zionist bureaucracy in general. In fact Zionist youth has no such influence nor does it try to have such influence. This is so in spite of the fact that not only does political activity within the Zionist bureaucracy involve the question of an ideology of "doing" that we have been discussing, but also that many of the day-to-day problems of existence of the Zionist youth groups are shaped by the policies and structure of the Zionist bureaucracy and the Youth Foundation in particular.

The American Zionist Youth Foundation is the entity within the Zionist bureaucracy of central importance to the Zionist youth groups. It is that part of the political environment on a national level closest to the daily life of Zionist youth. Finally, the Youth Foundation itself claims that its chief function is to service the Zionist youth groups.

In fact, the Youth Foundation has been a powerful force, to some extent unknowingly, in preventing the development of a Zionist youth movement in America in the sense that I have been employing the term. There are a number of reasons for this.

To begin with, the whole concept of "servicing" a movement is a contradiction in terms. No bureaucracy can ever service a movement except insofar as it allows itself to be completely subordinated to and come under the control of that movement; that is to say the bureaucracy must become the administrative machinery of the movement itself. The Youth Foundation is a part of the Zionist bureaucracy and responsible to higher agencies within that bureaucracy - not to the Zionist ^{Youth} groups. The main "service" the Youth Foundation can render to the Zionist youth groups is to give them direct and indirect financial assistance. A bureaucracy can relate to an organizational structure and service that organizational structure. The Youth Foundation attempts to do this - but on its own terms.

Those terms in essence are dictated by the view that the Zionist bureaucracy has of the Zionist youth groups. We have seen that these may be divided into two. On the one hand there are elements within the Zionist bureaucracy that see Zionist youth groups as children's organizations for maintaining Jewish identity and a sympathetic attitude to Israel. On the other hand, the various religious and Labor Zionist groupings within the bureaucracy see their Zionist youth groups either as a means of perpetuating their particular brand of the East European legacy of Zionist party politics or as a means of perpetuating a given Kibbutz Federation. Thus we see that the Zionist youth groups exist to be serviced and maintained by the Zionist bureaucracy - indeed they are used to justify the bureaucracy. The Zionist youth groups have little or no control of the bureaucracy with maintains them and it is the interests and needs of the adult Zionist movement rather than the interests and needs of the Zionist youth groups which define the political realities within the Youth Foundation. To put it in another way, the Youth Foundation does not service or further a Zionist youth movement - it services the need of all elements of the Zionist bureaucracy for maintaining their own continuity by means of a youth group.

In 1961, attempts by the American Zionist Youth Council (composed of the top national officer of each Zionist youth group) to achieve permanent participant-observer status on the policy-forming Youth Activities Committee of the American Zionist Council were rebuffed. The Youth Council was told that it must have more "trust and confidence" in the Youth Activities committee and its intentions. In general this rebuff was met by indifference among the top leadership of the Zionist youth groups, thus

showing once again that these groups simply do not see themselves as politically active. On the other hand it showed very clearly what the feeling towards the Zionist youth movements in the Youth Department is - youth is to be seen and praised but not heard.

The professional staff within the Youth Foundation are unknowing accomplices of the forces within the Zionist bureaucracy that wish to maintain the status quo. The professionals sincerely wish to help the Zionist youth groups, but most of them are limited in their understanding of the problems of an emergent movement. By and large their personal experience is limited to experience with Young Judaea, and this means the Young Judaea of an earlier day at that. Their self-image as "advisors", "interpreters of roles and policies" and "program co-ordinators" in "helping Zionist youth find its needs" quickly and easily result in the acceptance of the adult-child relationship implicit in the Zionist bureaucracy.

The American Zionist Youth Council

The recent emergence of an American Zionist Youth Council on the national level has provided Zionist youth leadership with a framework at least partly independent of the Zionist bureaucracy which can be used to express the collective will of the Zionist youth groups. The Zionist youth groups, however, have, been slow to realize the political potential of this Council.

It is symptomatic of the introverted nature of much of the Zionist youth leadership, a matter to which we shall return, that they all too often do not avail themselves of those political instruments that they do possess properly. By and large the national executives of the Zionist youth groups (including the chalutzic ones) are too "busy" with their day-to-day problems to think about "mere politics." Nevertheless, the trend on the American Zionist Youth Council must be in the direction of increasing involvement with programs and policies expressing the needs and opinions of an emerging Zionist youth movement.

The American Zionist Youth Council's efforts to play a political role on behalf of Zionist youth are, however, at too early a stage for us to be able to assess their real significance. In general, the factors making for political indifference on the American scene carry over into matters pertaining to the Zionist bureaucracy. Within the bureaucracy there are the many factors we have seen militating against the development of political consciousness among Zionist youth leadership.

In my opinion, the Zionist youth leadership faces its first test in evolving into a movement of "doing" (from the state of just "existing organizationally") in this matter of asserting its autonomous existence from the Zionist bureaucracy. If the leadership of the Zionist youth groups does not have the political ability to master the obsolescent bureaucratic structure which presently holds it prisoner, then I doubt if it can develop the ability to make an impact in the American Jewish community. After all, within the Zionist bureaucracy, the youth groups do have a certain status and moral right to demand by virtue of their ascriptive position as "Zionist youth movement." This does not hold true for the community at large.

In truth, the first task facing Zionist youth leadership is, as Judd Teller told the 25th convention of Habonim, to "rescue the revolution from bureaucracy."*

Educational Content of the Zionist Youth Groups

The complexity of factors favorable and unfavorable to the emergence of a Zionist youth movement makes it imperative for college level Zionist youth to have a distinctive educational program enabling them in some way to see their role in the American Jewish community and in Israel. In addition, a movement of social pioneering

*Judd Teller, Speech at the 25th Anniversary V'ida of North American Habonim, Washington D.C., 1959. (Proceedings of the V'ida, Habonim, New York, 1960.)

must have members who have a knowledge of contemporary social thinking. Unfortunately, the staples of Zionist programs are still Herzl, Syrkin and Borochov, and even these and other classical Zionist thinkers are inadequately presented. Chaverim should have an historical understanding of these thinkers. It is not my contention that they should be ignored. In the less ideological movements there is only Jewish history and no real ideology at all. Contemporary Jewish thinkers such as Maurice Samuel, Ben Halpern, Martin Buber, or Mordecai Kaplan are never discussed. Leading non-Jewish social thinkers such as C. Wright Mills are ignored. One of the most disturbing characteristics which one finds among Zionist youth today, some of them otherwise relatively sophisticated intellectuals, is their inability to use their academic knowledge to broaden their outlook on the problems of their work with Zionist youth groups. Habits of logical and orderly thinking seem to be jettisoned when it comes to Zionism. The quick generalization, the stop-gap solution, and the failure to take into account a multiplicity of factors at work in a given situation is characteristic of Zionist youth leadership. Although they may be superior students at college, Zionist youth leaders often seem to attack their Zionist problems like freshmen at high school. In my opinion this is at least partially due to the lack of a meaningful education and ideology in the Zionist youth groups at the college level within the framework of which Zionist youth leaders could effectively formulate their contemporary problems.

Problems of Existence

I have emphasized the dichotomy between the problems of existence or "being" in Zionist youth groups and the problems of doing - of perpetration rather than perpetuation. Nevertheless, the reader must not construe that the problems of existence are of little or no significance in preventing the development of a Zionist youth movement. A very significant contributing cause to the paralysis of Zionist youth leadership is the overwhelming burden of these problems of existence that they must assume - the training of leaders, the organization of programs, the maintenance of camping systems, the daily crises in personnel. Above all, at every turn every problem of the Zionist youth groups is aggravated by inadequate finances.

The combined annual national budgets of the four classically chalutzic groups (Habonim, Dror, Bnei Akiva and Hashomer Hatzair) do not exceed the annual operating cost of one medium-sized community center. The budgets of larger groups such as Young Judaea are equally inadequate, especially on the national level.

The amount of money that the Zionist youth groups really require is actually not large. Tremendous burdens would be eased and tremendous energies released by additional funds equivalent to the annual operating budget of two community centers. The failure of the Zionist bureaucracy to adequately finance youth work is surely the biggest disgrace of the Zionist movement today. Nor do resolutions passed at World Zionist Congresses calling for an increase in youth work without increasing the budget for such work seem very meaningful....

* * *

The complexity of the factors impinging on the environment of the Zionist youth groups is such that one might well despair of the emergence of a real Zionist youth movement. A politically conscious youth movement with an impact both in America and Israel seems to be far away indeed. The total effect on the Zionist youth groups as well as on the individual leaders within the Zionist youth groups of all the factors I have enumerated can best be described as alienation. What I mean by this term is the failure to develop (or loss of) individual and ideological Zionist identity through social and political processes of which one is unaware. The social processes at work among older Jewish adolescents have resulted in their individual alienation from Jewish and Zionist identity. In addition the political forces within the Zionist

bureaucracy have brought about the alienation of the Zionist youth groups from movements to mere children's organizations.

It is under these circumstances that we will now examine the prospects for a Zionist youth movement in America. We will also try to speculate as to what such a Zionist youth movement would have as its purpose and what the goal of its existence and political presence on the American Jewish and World Zionist scene would be.

Prospects for Zionist Youth

The cumulative effect of all the factors that I have recounted, the psycho-social moratorium inherent in contemporary Jewish adolescent culture, the negative political climate, the bias in favor of mere existence inherent within the Zionist bureaucracy to which the youth groups are subject, the dynamics of leadership within Zionist youth and the sterile educational content of the Zionist youth groups make the sudden emergence of a real Zionist youth movement as I have defined the term unlikely. Nevertheless, over a period of ten or fifteen years, I believe that such a movement could emerge. Perhaps the chief reason for the possible (even probable) emergence of a Zionist youth movement is the very real goals available to such a movement given an older, politically conscious leadership.

An autonomous Zionist youth movement leadership could and should jettison the present party structure of the various youth groups - this would be bound to have effects on the adult Zionist movement as well. From the ideological point of view, the various ideologies of the Zionist youth groups, especially Habonim and Young Judaea, are slowly converging. From the organizational point of view, Young Judaea with its wide distribution, Habonim with its autonomy and movement tradition, and the Student Zionist organization with its access to the campus age group, do form the potential basis of a united Zionist youth movement. Some type of working arrangement with the Religious Zionist youth movement must also be worked out. It is my belief that such a united movement might, in whole or in part, arise from a structure such as that of the American Zionist Youth Council. Needless to say, the Zionist youth groups are still 5 to 10 years away from such a step.

Such a movement would automatically have financial and leadership resources at present simply unavailable because they are being squandered in the maintenance of ten different organizations. At the same time such a movement would be in a position to evolve a meaningful way to present itself on the American Jewish youth scene.

In the long run, a united Zionist youth movement in America might not only precipitate changes in the adult Zionist movement in America, but over a period of time it might also be a factor in bringing about change in the political and social structure of Israel as well. Such developments presuppose an increased and more effectively organized aliyah. It also presupposes that American olim will be active and have effect in all sectors of Israeli life.

An effective Zionist youth movement might seek to have certain far-reaching effects on the American Jewish community - especially Jewish education. By the nature of its ideology, a Zionist youth movement could re-shape the values of the American Jewish community. The status accorded to matters of the intellect, particularly the Jewish intellect, might well rise and the status accorded to the attainment of things material might well be lowered - at least by a little bit.

For basic values in terms of status and achievement within the American Jewish community to change, the American Jewish community will have to develop a democratic and representative communal structure. Only within such a structure can there be a curb on the increasing power within the Jewish community of those with material means. An American Jewish community with such a communal structure presumes that American Jews will not merely see themselves as a religion, but rather as a part of

Khal Israel. It presumes that, at least for the Jews, cultural pluralism in America can become a reality and that, in the words of Nachum Goldmann "in a real democracy we have the right to be different."

One often hears the opinion expressed that the functions of the Zionist youth groups will be taken over by the general Jewish youth organizations. This may become true if the Zionist youth groups become children's organizations in the way I outlined. However, no adult-dominated group serving, knowingly or unknowingly, as the carrier of values of the normative American Jewish society and educating formally and informally towards the status quo within that society, can take the place of a Zionist youth movement according to the criteria I described.

The reader may agree with the analysis I have made - that there are indeed valid goals for a Zionist youth movement in the sense that I have used the term. But the question may then be asked: "Have not you yourself pointed out in considerable detail the inadequacy of the Zionist youth leadership to take on such tasks as you now set forth? From where will the leadership for such a Zionist youth movement come?"

I have said that a Zionist youth movement "could emerge." In truth, it may or it may not. It will emerge if, over the next five to fifteen years there is a shift in age of Zionist youth leadership from the undergraduate level to the post-graduate level. In addition, chalutzic youth must return to the campus. The logical focus of Zionist youth leadership is in the post-graduate schools of social science in particular. Such a leadership, a significant nucleus of which would have to accept criteria of a chalutzic movement that I have proposed, would theoretically have the background to deal effectively with the complexity of the problems that a Zionist youth movement in America involves. Such a leadership (I speak in term of a few hundred people at the post-graduate level) would be able to generate the political power necessary to radically change the Zionist bureaucracy. Such a leadership would not long permit the Zionist youth movement to remain on the periphery of the American Jewish scene.

The slow growth of American Zionist youth groups will doubtless continue undramatically for the next few years. However I believe that given even the partial alleviation of some of the factors we have surveyed, older indigenous leadership for a Zionist youth movement can and will emerge.

From the essay, THE ZIONIST YOUTH MOVEMENT
IN AMERICA, January, 1962

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LEADERSHIP IN A CHALUTZIC YOUTH MOVEMENT

The problem of an effective national leadership is perhaps the most serious internal problem that a chalutzic youth movement must face on a continuous basis. Without such effective national leadership the chalutzic groups will remain small, insignificant, and relatively unknown groups on the periphery of the American Jewish youth scene. By national leadership of a chalutzic youth group I mean its Merkaz (Central Executive Committee) and more essentially its Mazkirut (Secretariat). At present, it is my belief that lack of awareness of what is involved in leadership has prevented the emergence and the acceptance of effective leadership in the chalutzic youth movement in North America. The purpose of this essay is to offer some initial thoughts on a number of aspects of this problem.

Function of National Leadership

There appear to be two basic approaches current with regard to the function of national leadership in a chalutzic youth movement. The approach which has been used during the past ten years has viewed the chief function of the national leadership as being mainly the organizational continuity and development of the movement itself. Such an approach views the movement's national administration in terms of its various functions - assignment of personnel, production of educational material and publications, supervision of summer camps, administration of year-in-Israel programs (e.g., the Habonim Workshop), and organization of aliyah and garinim. In truth, following the calamitous decline of the chalutzic youth movement upon the establishment of Israel, little else could be expected from the chalutzic youth movement, other than concern for organizational survival. In my opinion, the chalutzic movement is passing this stage.

The second approach to the function of national leadership in a chalutzic movement is based on a fundamental ideological assumption. This assumption is that the chalutzic movement is ideologically committed to questioning its environment and seeking to change it - hopefully in such a way that we come ever closer to our ideals of social justice and creative Jewish survival wherever we may be. This is the basis of the chalutzic approach to humanity in general, to the American Jewish community, and to the Jewish National Home. It follows that the chief function of chalutzic leadership in the Galut is to find and implement ways and means of consistently, effectively, and constructively questioning the established values of that Galut (especially those of its Jewish community). It is to be hoped that the aliyah generated by such a leadership will have the ability to question established values in Israel as well. Our aliyah must not go to Israel in order to be "at ease in Zion". The attempt to create an ever-more-perfect society must continue in the National Home as the natural outgrowth of a movement that questions.

Administrative Implications

It will be apparent that these two approaches to the function of national leadership are not mutually exclusive. However, without the presence of a leadership that can question effectively we are left with a mere organization and not a real movement.

There is one major area of potential friction between these two schools of thought. Administratively, the traditional school tends to try to perpetuate and improve upon existing structure and function and by doing so to improve the movement. On the other hand, those who act in accordance with the ideological assumption that we must continually question and evolve will tend to see the administrative apparatus as a mere tool. The given administrative structure and division of tafkidim (functions) within it will be seen as something quite flexible and in no way

continuous. Thus the individuals who happen to be within a traditional administration are bound to feel threatened in the face of an approach that pays little heed to established procedures in its impatient pursuit of a broader vision of the movement's role in history. Finally, it must be pointed out in this regard that at this particular juncture in American Jewish history the relative impotence of the chalutzic youth movement is such that it is not unreasonable to suppose that relatively radical changes in the administrative functioning and orientation of the chalutzic leadership are called for.

It must be kept in mind that over-concern with administrative continuity must inevitably breed a national leadership of mere functionaries - each individual merely carrying on or fulfilling a particular role. If the chaverim in the national leadership of a chalutzic youth movement are serving purely as functionaries, fulfilling the various tasks into which the national administration has been divided, then they are inevitably failing to use the organization in their hands to question the status quo. In such a case, there can be no intellectual ferment, no tension, and ultimately no movement.

It must be understood that because of the internal structure of a chalutzic youth movement only those in the institutionalized national leadership are in an effective position to act as leaders in this questioning. They are the only ones who have the time. By means of correspondence and tours they have actual access to the movement at the grass roots level and are in a position to stimulate it. If the people who should be leaders become administrators only, then the movement will really have no effective leadership at all. I believe that during the past ten years this has indeed been the case in the chalutzic youth movements here in North America.

To some extent the two approaches with regard to the function of leadership must be combined. Reforms cannot be so radical as to threaten the organizational viability of a movement. Nevertheless, here too considerable disagreement may exist with regard to how radically the national administration and national leadership of a movement should be reformed, and ones basic outlook in terms of the two approaches I have posited is crucial.

I believe that by the very nature of the chalutzic youth movement, its national leadership must have the inner moral strength and self-confidence to question its own methods of operation, its basic values and approaches, and its interpretation of movement tradition. Certainly the leadership of a movement predicated upon the notion that society must be changed continuously in order to achieve messianic perfection cannot reject those within the movement who may seek radical and unorthodox changes within the existing movement "establishment". Such action, when it occurs, is ideologically inconsistent and makes a sham out of the basic values of the movement.

Personality and Leadership

We have seen how there are differing approaches to the functions of national leadership and how, on the level of national administration, considerable friction might arise between the two differing types of outlook on this matter. Furthermore, it can be shown that this question has some relation to the general question of personality and/or general suitability of a chaver to participate in the national leadership of a chalutzic youth movement.

In terms of personality and general suitability it is my belief that chaverim in the national leadership must have demonstrated ability to lead and this should have been proved on a local level. It is important to note the reaction of local chaverim who have worked with and been led by a particular person. It is not enough to be

an "organization man" in the cold sense of the term. Sometimes chalutzic movements make the mistake of laying undue emphasis on the question of the "compatibility" of a person's personality with other members of the national leadership. Does this person fit into the given "configuration" of the national leadership, is the way the question is put. In my opinion, it is wrong to even raise such questions if an individual has shown the ability to lead and to work with others on the local levels. Objectively it seems unlikely that a person can consistently project a positive personality image to one group of people and a negative image to another group.

What is possible and what can happen is that an emergent leadership that seriously see the Habonim apparatus as a means to the political and social ends of a messianic Zionist movement will be unacceptable to a leadership that sees itself primarily functioning in terms of organizational continuity and development. On the most elementary level such a leadership threatens the entrenched administration in many ways. Thoroughgoing administrative revisions threaten the given roles that the traditional administration has learned to play. The demand for radical administrative reform is inevitably interpreted as personal criticism by a leadership group not accustomed to thinking of their leadership function in the broad sense on a day to day basis. Such emergent leadership is seen by the existing leadership as "an opposition" of established ways and values. It is actually what the new leadership might propose rather than the things it might oppose that create the threat and even in this, fear is generally out of all proportion to the reality. If such a leadership has already had some initial success in having itself and/or its ideas accepted within the movement by working outside the established movement administration, this will add to the fear and panic within the established administration.

Under these circumstances the reaction of a traditional administration may well be to bring forward all kinds of personality considerations why the emergent leadership is unacceptable and why the established leadership cannot accept the newly emerging leadership. The real point here is, of course, that no administration can be allowed to stifle emergent leadership on the basis of such patently subjective considerations, for to do so is to crush latent trends of non-conformity all over the movement. That is a luxury that the chalutzic youth movement on this continent cannot allow itself at the present time. A national leadership that is not prepared to tolerate chaverim with differing approaches to leadership and administration (or anything else) within its configuration must inevitably be called to account by the movement as a whole.

Shlichim and National Leadership

In a number of chalutzic youth movements effective leadership on the national level is almost completely in the hands of shlichim. These groups can scarcely be considered movements indigenous to the American scene - they are organizations maintained in America by an Israeli mishlachat. Other chalutzic youth movements which have recently greatly enlarged their number of shlichim must be careful that the mishlachat does not unwittingly take over the real leadership of the movement.

On the local level a situation may often exist where a shaliach must for a period of time take the major responsibility unto himself for maintaining the movement in a local area. This is an unfortunate situation when it arises, and one would hope that the movement would make every effort to help a shaliach extricate himself from such a situation as quickly as possible.

What should be of even greater concern is the tendency for some shlichim to become involved in the national leadership to the point where they become pivotal factors in the selection or nonselection, the emergence or non-emergence, of indigenous leadership of various sorts. Occasionally shlichim have become involved in (and even instigated) internal political problems in a chalutzic youth movement; this is incompatible with a movement's basic autonomy. In general, shlichim should concentrate on their educational work with the movement.

Leadership Age and Leadership "Generation"

In the matter of leadership age and "generation" there are also different schools of thought discernible within the chalutzic youth movement at the present time.

The traditional school of thought maintains that, relatively speaking, in a chalutzic youth movement the national leadership must be of the same "generation" in terms of movement development, and of the same approximate chronological age. This school views the movement as a steady process of waves of chaverim arising by organic development from within the movement and within each wave the most capable chaverim are the national leadership. Each movement wave passes on - either to leave the movement or to realize its aims in Israel and thus make room for the next wave which is already immediately behind it.

This is indeed what took place within the classical chalutzic youth movement structure in Eastern Europe. Here in America the traditional school of thought still holds considerable sway - especially in a movement such as Hashomer Hatzair, perhaps less so in Habonim. However, in Habonim the concept of the successive waves of movement development has been made more liberal to include a larger age span and the co-existence of more than one wave or generation within the movement at a given time. But the basic idea, by and large, has not been questioned.

If we examine this rather mechanistic outlook on the chalutzic movement closely, we will find that it is based on a number of assumptions which were more or less correct in Eastern Europe a generation ago and may even be partly correct in the Israel of today, but by no means apply to the situation in North America in 1964.

The first assumption that is made is that adolescent development and the making of a life decision within the movement will follow relatively uniform and parallel lines among the members of a youth movement. This assumption was basically correct in the past for a number of reasons. First of all, youth did make life decisions of some sort at ages eighteen and nineteen in Eastern Europe. The decision might have been to go on hachshara, the decision might have been to emigrate to America, the decision might have been to continue study in a Yeshiva, but the decision in most cases was made before the age of twenty. Secondly, the assumption of uniform and parallel development was correct because the chalutzic movement of a generation ago educated without reservation to one type of aliya - aliya to the kibbutz.

These assumptions no longer hold true amongst American Jewish youth today. Life decisions may be made at any time up to the mid-twenties because of the favorable economic conditions and the lack of social and political factors demanding immediate ideological commitment. Secondly, the trend among at least some of the chalutzic movements (e.g., Habonim) is away from kibbutz aliya as the only really fully sanctioned form of aliya. In fact, today it is conceivable for aliya decisions to be made anywhere in the course of a four to eight year post-high school education. This widening of the time period within which chaverim make aliya decisions, a time period of up to eight years within which they can theoretically still be active in the movement, creates an unprecedented situation for the chalutzic movement and its leadership. Within the course of these four to eight years an almost infinite variety of patterns of movement activity, aliya decision, personal and vocational development may take place, completely nullifying the possibility of setting up "waves" in the classic sense. Thus it is wrong to base national leadership in the chalutzic youth movement of today on the basis of membership in a particular movement "generation". That is to say, it is possible to do it in practice, but to make it a principle is unrealistic.

Youth and Young Adults

The traditional outlook on the question of leadership needs revision in still another significant respect. The youth movement of today needs a young adult leadership. By youth, I mean adolescents - those who have not reached that stage of psychological and social maturity where they have crystallized a life decision as well as a general outlook on their world. In this sense adolescence may last until the mid-twenties. The young adult, on the other hand, has reached the stage where he is sufficiently secure to have an integrated sense of identity and outlook. In the American chalutzic youth movement of today I believe that the youth must look to a young adult leadership which is the product of contemporary social forces on the American scene. The chalutzic youth movement today suffers badly from the lack of young adult leadership - it is in a large part not yet ready to recognize the necessity of having them.

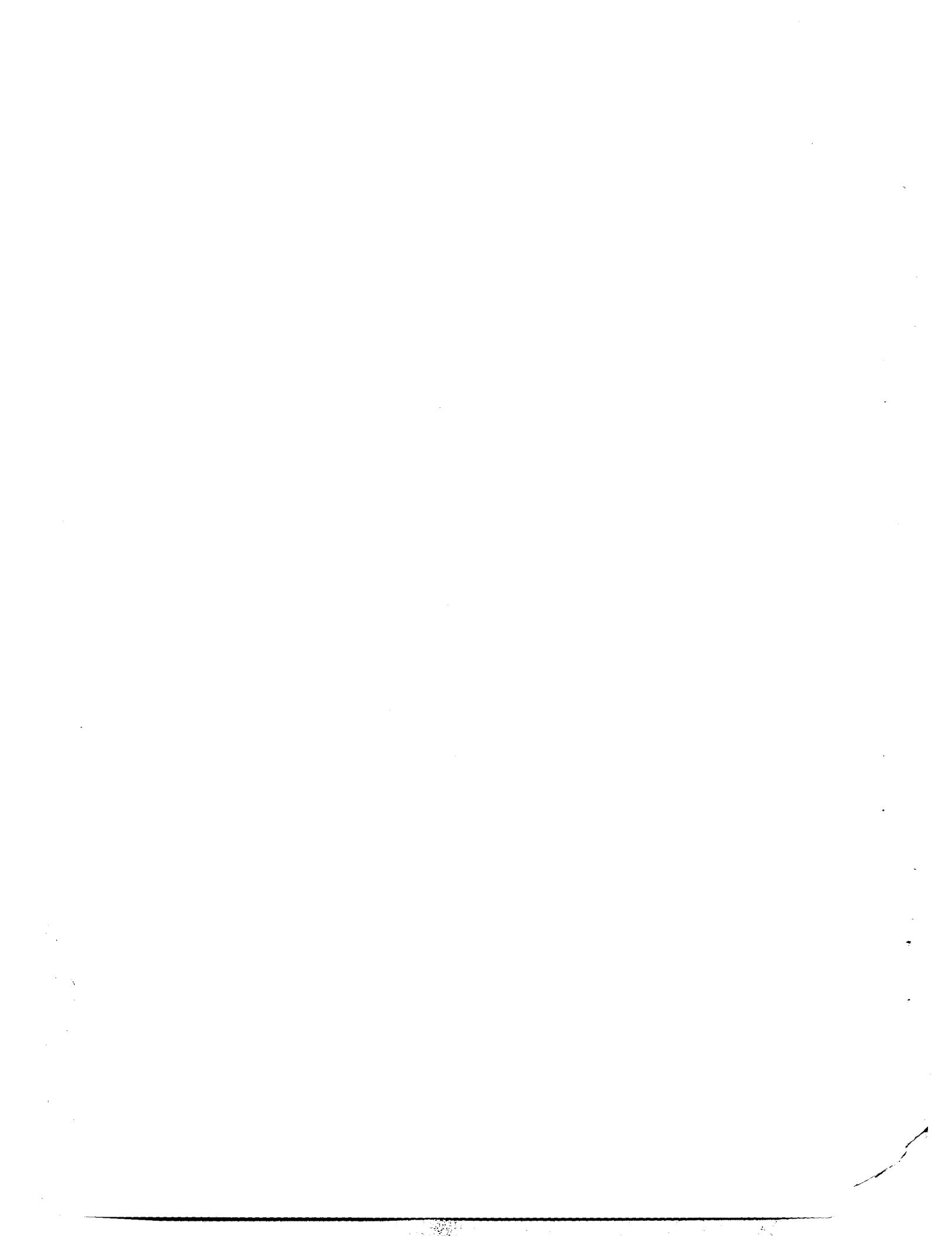
To a large extent, the only young adults present in the movement are the shlichim, and part of the reason for their difficulties is the fact that they have no indigenous young adults to work with.

There is another feature which I find objectionable in the "wave" concept. It allows no place for the "marginal man" or deviant from the movement norm who may yet have much to say to the movement. Certainly a movement which looks to the prophets, who are classical examples of deviants, for much of its inspiration must make allowances for this type of leadership as well.

The concept of the "wave" can still be used and it can be based on a concept of movement "generation" as well. However, the concept of movement generation cannot be based on year-in-Israel groups (e.g., the Habonim Workshop) or on age. It must be based on the group of people in the movement at a given time who find their commitment crystallizing at a given time. There may always be some relation of age and Workshop chevra group to the given movement generation, but these factors cannot be the determining ones in the selection of leadership.

It is hoped that the given group of people that may find their movement commitment crystallizing at the same period of time will become larger, older, and more heterogeneous. At present, the similarity in background and experience amongst chalutzic leadership results in a certain lack of ferment and dynamism. If the chalutzic leadership moves to achieve closer integration with the Student Zionist Organization this would be one way of breaking up the current homogeneity in chalutzic leadership. Thus the variety in the nature and the method of chalutzic commitment will become ever greater. Hopefully this can and will create a pool of committed potential leadership with a broader outlook, a greater tolerance for diverse approaches, and eventually, greater effectiveness in meeting the challenges that await the chalutzic youth movement in the world's largest Jewish community.

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American Zionist

Youth Movements

Must Unite

Join

the GTCAC

Montgomery Park

Montgomery Park

AMERICAN ZIONIST YOUTH MOVEMENTS MUST UNITE

NO LESS THAN 10 Zionist youth organizations exist in the U. S. today, with a total membership—on paper—of about 25,000. This figure represents an age range of 10 to 25, a grouping in which we can count at least 1,000,000 American Jewish young people. I believe that there is no valid reason—ideological or otherwise—for the maintenance of 10 separate organizations. It would be in our best interest for these groups to unite.

The fact that they have not yet done so reveals two of the most serious shortcomings of contemporary American Zionist youth. First, a lack of mature indigenous leadership that is able to perceive new realities, and act accordingly; secondly, a stifling political and financial dependence upon parent organizations—both in America and in Israel. As Arthur Hertzberg pointed out to a seminar of Zionist youth leaders last spring, we can no longer speak of American Zionist youth movements as such. "The Zionist youth groups," he stated, "are mere appendages to the *takziv*, the budget of the sponsoring body."

With the creation of the State of Israel, most adult Zionist organizations have been frantically seeking out new reasons for existence and survival. This has become a primary concern, all too often to the exclusion of new ideas and fresh approaches. Their policies seem to reflect a picture of Zionist party politics as it existed in Eastern Europe thirty years earlier, or, to a lesser extent, Israeli party politics today.

Unfortunately, the youth movements tend to imitate the adults, absorbing themselves in problems of organization and technical procedure. Furthermore, they conceive of themselves 'as their parents would see them', and measure their achievements accordingly—i.e., "to what extent are we fulfilling the needs and expectations of our sponsoring body?"

Thus, the youth movements ignore

the real and crucial issues confronting them today. They do not properly understand their role or their reason for existence.

In pre-State days there was a measure of justification for ideological particularism. The differences, then, were generic to the reality and mood of the times. Questions such as "What type of society should exist in the Jewish State?" or "What should be the political form of a Jewish national homeland?" were crucial—then.

Today, the ideological heart of Zionism is the proposition that Jews in America exist in Galut—in a state of "alienation"—and that Zionism can point to practical paths by which this state of Galut-alienation can be ameliorated. Even Israel remains Galut so long as the socially just society within the Jewish National Home remains only partially realized.

Those who wish to see Israel built after the particular model of a given political party can, as a first step, go on Aliya. Their concern with such problems while still in Galut tends to blur the Zionist image and gives a false impression of what Zionism is really all about.

Heyday of "Isms"

Furthermore, the American Zionist youth movements of the thirties were closely akin, spiritually and psychologically, to their Eastern European counterparts. This was an age of ideology, the heyday of political radicalism here, of movements that meant to change the very face of society; a time when "ism" stood for concrete social possibility, rather than animated parlor talk. The differences of opinion that existed then were fundamental; and fulfillment of movement principles had to be demanded from members.

This is no longer the case. In fact, the Zionist youth movements have been converging ideologically for

the last several years. No Zionist youth group denies *aliya* (emigration to Israel) a central place in its program—the difference between "a central place" and "the central place" has been reduced, for the most part, to semantic bickering, with no jarring connotation to the majority of members. And even when the adult body is lukewarm to this aim, it is tacitly encouraged, both by the professionals and, even more, the indigenous youth leadership. Of even greater significance is the growing acceptance by the youth of the alien nature of Jewish existence outside the Jewish homeland—i.e., the reality of *Galut* (Exile).

Furthermore, the *halutzic* (pioneering) movements, traditionally the unbending champions of *Kibbutz* as the framework for *hagshama atzmit* (personal self-realization), are now accepting members whose commitment is to *aliya* in general. These movements, by the way, have an active membership above the age of 19 or 20.

Perhaps the greatest reason for this growing ideological homogeneity is the fact that most of the top leadership of the movements has already been to Israel—very likely on a full year's program, and many more have visited Israel for at least a summer. While it is true that there are variations in curriculum and orientation, the overwhelming impact of Israel—good or bad—far outweighs these differences. This is a constant, irrespective of previous Zionist affiliation. And the emotional impact of Israel upon Zionist youth is qualitatively different from its impact upon non-Zionist youth.

Zionist political parties in the Diaspora are basically irrelevant today. The State of Israel exists, and, as we have pointed out above, its society can only be determined from within.

The idea of adult groups educating the youth who wish to go on *aliya* toward a particular political and social outlook before the fact, is, in my opinion, unacceptable. Similarly, there

is no moral justification for Israeli political parties to indoctrinate Diaspora youth with an outlook that is only germane to Israeli political life.

Finally, it is inconsistent, if not downright ludicrous, for the Zionist movement to insist, as it has been doing for the past few years, that its ideological lines transcend the political actuality of Israel, while in the same breath, it models its internal organization along Israeli political party lines.

The practical considerations militating toward the unification of Zionist youth are, perhaps, even more pressing than the ideological ones. The program material of the Zionist youth groups is pretty much the same; exorbitant duplication takes place on every level. This becomes all the more pathetic when we remind ourselves of the paltry resources at our disposal. Twenty five thousand is a small enough number, but even the majority of these members are either "transients" or too young to be of significance. In all, there are, perhaps, slightly more than 500 committed Zionist youth in North America over the age of 18. I include those who are nominally ex-members still working with the youth, although they are arbitrarily ruled overage by the adult sponsoring bodies, e.g., Young Judaea *Hever* Leadership Council.

In addition, there is a tragic waste of manpower, both in terms of indigenous leadership and professionals, *shlichim* included. This duplication of activity and pointless expenditure of energy indicate a sad lack of realism on the part of the Zionist youth leadership.

With such needless internal division, how can an influential number of people, however dedicated, hope to make an impact upon the mass of American Jewish youth? How do they communicate? How do they make themselves heard?

The continuing delineation of Zionist youth groups along political lines not really relevant to the contemporary American scene is only one part of the problem. A second aspect is to be found among those Zionist youth groups that are identical (or nearly so) politically, but are separated from each other on the basis of the intensity of their respective support of *aliya* or *halutziut*.

A clear example of this can be found among the religious Zionists. *Bnei Akiva* is *halutzic* and *kibbutz*-oriented. *Mizrachi Hatzair* claims to be oriented to *aliya* but not specifically *hityashvut* (agricultural settlement), and gears its program to the American scene as well.

Let us examine the consequences of such a split.

As Professor Simon Herman has pointed out,* the development of a strong Zionist commitment is part of a long, drawn out process; the individual gradually adjusts his values to the "Zionist climate" that exists in a given group. Among the American youth, where he studied the changes in attitude towards increasing Zionist commitment, Herman found that it was the group that acts as the medium of change.

Naturally, the degree of change that takes place is determined by the strength of the group's leadership. It is only logical, then, to assume that if the Zionist movement honestly wants to encourage *halutziut* and *aliya*, then, at least in those cases where there is no major political difference, the intensive *aliya*-oriented youth must be allowed to develop into the leadership for the less committed Zionist youth.

Unity of Religious Zionists

In order to function as an organic whole, the Zionist youth movement must have within itself the means of passing through every stage of the decision-making process that leads to full commitment. The present situation inhibits this development in several of the youth organizations, while in others, it isolates the committed groups, discouraging them from having contact with a larger public. Indeed, the committed all too often become tight little in-groups, not inclined to interest or include people outside of the *hevra* (immediate social group).

Thus, to my mind, there is no doubt that the effectiveness of the religious Zionist youth movement would be greatly enhanced, were *Bnei Akiva* and *Mizrachi Hatzair* to join forces.

One sometimes hears the argument that in order to insure the continuity of Zionist leadership in America, the adult Zionist movement must maintain a framework for youth who is not *aliya*-oriented. This argument is specious on two grounds: First, the majority of graduates, even of the *halutzic* movements, do NOT go on *aliya*; secondly, and more important, it is the intensity of the Zionist commitment in the *halutzic* groups that is crucial. Normally, one would hope that an integral part of such a commitment would be *aliya*, but the complexity of forces at play upon the life of the young American Jew often precludes such an outcome. The question then arises—how can this commitment express itself in America? The answer is that only those who have been exposed and acculturated to a deep Zionist commitment are likely to be effective and creative Zionist leaders in the Diaspora.

One final point regarding the differentiation between *halutzic* and non-*halutzic* youth. The term *halutzic* youth movement will, I feel, become synonymous with "Zionist youth movement." Pioneering can no longer be defined exclusively as *hityashvut*. *Halutziut* today has come to mean social pioneering—the conscious effort to build a society in the Jewish National Home that will reflect ultimate perfection in human relationships. The *kibbutz* is but a single step in this direction; the potential is limitless. American Jewish youth must be a major part of this process.

On the other hand, a youth movement that does not seriously organize *aliya*—on a group basis, from within its own ranks—cannot, in my opinion, be considered Zionist. There will be, in the future, an increasingly clear distinction between "pro-Israel" groups—which will remain in the vast majority—and outright Zionist groups.

There is little logic in suggesting that there is less possibility of social pioneering among individuals in a "non-*halutzic*" group, such as *Young Judaea* than there is in a "*halutzic*" group, such as *Habonim*. Both groups have members who, on the basis of their Israel experience, are ready to become committed. However, *Young Judaea* has not yet developed means of crystalliz-

* S. N. Herman, "Education Towards Zionism," *Forum* (No. 5) World Zionist Organization, Jerusalem, January, 1962.

ing this commitment effectively; and Habonim has failed to develop channels of commitment other than Kibbutz.

Halutzut today is an approach to a creative Jewish life in the State of Israel. All committed American Zionist youth can be part of this process if they accept the challenge.

One of the most destructive factors working to separate Zionist youth movements is a division on the basis of age. The most prominent example of this is Young Judaea, the largest and most widely distributed Zionist youth organization in the United States. Young Judaea's age limit is 18. Thus, the largest Zionist youth movement in the country is compelled to disband before a mature, committed leadership can arise within it. It is worth our while to examine, briefly, the entire relationship of youth and age to the problem of life decisions and commitment, and then comment upon its implications for the Zionist youth movements.

When a person decides to be a committed Zionist, he is making a life decision. Life decisions are not made by youth—but by young adults. The central social problem of youth or adolescence (I am using the terms synonymously) is the problem of developing a sense of identity.*

"What am I? Where do I belong? How am I getting there?" The development of answers—conscious and unconscious—to these questions sets off the young adult from the adolescent. What marks the transition from adolescence to young adulthood is the decision-conscious or unconscious—to "take hold of some kind of life." It is clear that meaningful life decisions cannot be made by those who have not yet crystallized such a sense of identity.

The label, "youth movement," often obscures the fact that to be effective educationally, a youth movement must be led by young adults who have definitively committed themselves to its ideals. In the Eastern Europe of a generation ago, young people at the age of 18 or 19 were capable of doing so—e.g., going on *hachshara* or even *aliya*;

* Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society*, Chapter VII, W. W. Norton & Co., New York, 1950.

and, to some extent, this is true of Israeli youth today—especially those in the Israeli youth movements.

However, amongst the youth of the contemporary American middle class (which includes the vast majority of American Jews), life decisions are made—more often than not—in the early twenties, and not executed until the late twenties.

This delay in decision-making is particularly true of college students. The previous generation of American Jewish youth went to college with a fairly definite goal in mind—to climb the American socio-economic ladder. These young people often came from poor immigrant homes. They had to make their life decisions early, and pursue them with vigor. This was true, not only of the vast majority who were trying to better their economic standing, but also of the tiny minority who formed the nuclei of the *halutzic* youth movements in America up to 1948. Today, the children of the second generation American Jews do not have the need to improve their socio-economic status—they have "arrived." They are attending college because this is what normative middle class society expects of them.

Today, if one asks a freshman or sophomore: "What are you doing on the campus?"—the response is very likely to be: "I'm taking a course."

In truth, just about any course will do. And in the early undergraduate years, the courses are so general that there is no question of making a life decision. Only in the later years, and/or as a post-graduate, does the student drift into a definitive area of study.

Society today lends strong support to remaining a student as long as possible. It does not demand an early crystallization of life patterns. Furthermore, the political situation in America vis-a-vis the Jew is relatively stable; there is certainly no economic pressure upon Jewish youth. There exists a period of extended adolescence among the American middle class youth of today, with a concomitant moratorium on the making of life decisions. Thus, very few American Jewish youth are, in fact, capable of making such decisions at age 18—especially one of Zionist commitment.

Therefore, we must provide a nucleus of young adults that has already made such a commitment. In order to do so, we must extend the age of a Zionist youth movement into the mid-twenties.

Furthermore, only young adults, with a certain amount of experience and sophistication, can hope to make an impact on the American Jewish community at large.

Thus, to limit a youth movement on the basis of age, in effect, *destroys the continuity of the life-decision-making process*. Professor Herman's point must be emphasized again: *The group is the medium of change*. To impose a retirement age too soon is to abort the process.

Young Judaea

Theoretically, after the age of 18, Young Judaeans join one of the young adult organizations—Young Zionists or Junior Hadassah—sponsored by the Zionist Organization of America and Hadassah respectively. Actually, this very seldom is the case—especially in the case of the leadership nucleus. Much of the Judaean potential is lost because their group is broken up. *Never*, the leaders' organization, is only a partial answer, and certainly is no substitute for an integral older leadership.

This emasculation of the largest Zionist youth movement is, in my opinion, the single, most detrimental factor working against development of a united Zionist youth movement in this country. It is the American Zionist movement as a whole, which stands to lose in the long run, for an older Young Judaea would be an excellent starting point for a revitalized American Zionism.

The Labor Zionists

We must now turn to the three Labor Zionist youth movements, Dror, Hashomer Hatzair and Ichud Habonim. Their respective ideological lines reflect precisely, the schismatic differences among the various Israeli labor parties and kibbutz movements—differences which are hardly relevant to the education of American Zionist youth toward pioneering, either in the phys-

ical or social sense of the word.

The "tragic reality" of Israeli politics is used to justify this continuing situation. In actuality, this is an admission that the present leadership of the *halutzic* groups does not have the boldness or the imagination to grapple with the problem. These youth movements have become very much dependent upon *shlichim* whose influence, especially on a national level, is very great—even decisive. In effect, whether the *shlichim* like it or not—and most do not—on a national level they assume the role of political commissars. They must make sure that no really radical change in ideology will take place. Indeed, were it not for the *shlichim*, small groups, such as Dror and Hashomer Hatzair, would not exist. And if the Labor Zionist youth movement were to jettison their political affiliations, there would be a united movement in short order.

But, from the point of view of most *shlichim*, the question of party politics is secondary. Their prime consideration (and I speak primarily of the national level—not of the *shaliach* working in the field) is to ensure a flow of settlement groups from the American youth groups to the kibbutzim of their particular party. A group such as Hashomer Hatzair frankly demands a decision to settle on one of its kibbutzim as a prerequisite to continued membership. However, such policies, if pursued by all the *halutzic* youth movements, endanger the potential expression of other forms of *halutzut*—forms as yet unborn.

Joining a *garin*, a settlement group, is precisely the kind of decision that must be made by a young adult. By imposing an early commitment upon its members, the movement forces a large percentage of people to leave its ranks. These are people whose commitments will not be ready to crystallize until they are 24 or 25. And they are by no means the least creative element of the movements.

The *garinim* (and, for that matter, the Labor Zionist youth movements in general) are tight in-groups of people who have known each other for many years. They see themselves as centers of influence. They do hope to attract others to their ranks, but only those

within their particular movement. The people in the *garinim* are naturally—and correctly—the leadership of the Labor Zionist movements, but paradoxically, they would never think of using the *garin*—a symbol of ultimate Zionist commitment—to attract new members. As for college students looking for a framework of Zionist commitment, the existence of *garinim* is virtually unknown.

Habonim, the most widely distributed and largest Labor Zionist youth movement, recently decided to take a far more active role in the Student Zionist Organization. This was certainly in keeping with the pattern of a generation ago, when the *halutzic* groups played a major role in the leadership of the Zionist movement on the campus. However, among the average Habonim members at the undergraduate level, this policy has been accepted with only lukewarm enthusiasm. The rationalization given is, of course, that "we have no time—we are busy with our own problems." But, the crucial factor, in my opinion, is that, as undergraduates—even if they are members of a *garin*—this element of the Labor Zionist movement is adolescent rather than young adult. They do not want their social relationships, within their adolescent peer group, threatened by outsiders. And, were they to project themselves as committed Zionists, that is what they would be compelled to do.

In practice, therefore, the Labor Zionist youth movements are quite satisfied with their relative isolation from the wider circles of Jewish youth.

Adult Leadership

Thus, the prospect for a united Zionist youth movement in the United States remains bleak. Only an older leadership—a more mature leadership—can combat this adolescent tendency toward tightly knit, self-absorbed peer-groups.

Under the present circumstances, the significance of existing *garinim* is purely local—as centers of Zionist commitment, their impact is felt only within the limited circles of Labor Zionist youth—i.e. between 3,000 and 4,000 Jewish youth. Not surprisingly, Amer-

ican *halutzut* makes an impact in Israel only on the particular kibbutzim that it reinforces.

The average age of the *garin* member is about 19 or 20. At that age, perhaps some of them can meaningfully commit themselves to carrying on a certain way of life—e.g. the kibbutz. I question whether they can do more than follow paths already pioneered by others.

The Labor Zionist youth movements are unable to initiate new types of social pioneering in the Jewish National Home because their leadership is too young, too homogeneous and ideologically inbred. The latter factor—both a cause and an effect of the social isolation I have mentioned—must eventually result in a lack of intellectual spontaneity; a sterility with regard to new ideas.

If the Labor Zionist movements become simply a means of perpetuating the kibbutz or—even more narrowly—certain specific kibbutzim, they will lose the historical significance that a movement of Jewish social pioneering could have for the American Jewish community, as well as the State of Israel. Nor can such narrowly oriented groups become the leadership of a more broadly based, united Zionist youth movement.

The road to Zionist youth unity will not be easy. The leadership must grow more aware of the factors that affect their movements and themselves as individuals. Indeed, with so many of our Zionist youth rushing into courses of psychology, sociology and political science, it is a source of constant amazement to me that they do not use these techniques to analyze their situation.

Every Zionist youth movement must work toward a greater degree of autonomy. Only relatively autonomous groups of young adults, able to communicate with each other directly—and meaningfully—can provide the basis for a united Zionist youth movement. I use the term "relative autonomy" advisedly—no Zionist youth group can be completely free of the adult Zionist organization, and that is not what is being suggested. However, matters such as determining age limits of members, political party affiliation and financial

policy should be the responsibility of the youth itself.

I do not believe that autonomy, *per se*, is the solution to the deeper educational and ideological problems of Zionist youth—problems which in themselves would require at least several essays. However, a greater degree of autonomy is an important first step in the right direction.

It is crucial that the Zionist youth movements begin to cooperate more intensively—especially through such instrumentalities as Zionist Youth Councils, both on the local and national level. Inter-group contact will inevitably bring about a realization that all the movements face similar problems and challenges.

In a way, the first step towards Zionist youth unity has already been taken. In agreeing to work together on the campus within the framework of the Student Zionist Organization (S.Z.O.), the movements have laid the foundation for working together on the all-important adult level.

S.Z.O.

However, those who see S.Z.O. as a substitute for other Zionist activity, or as the group that one "graduates into," are mistaken, in my opinion.

As I noted when discussing the problem of Young Judaea, the process of Zionist commitment must take place within the context of a youth movement over a relatively long period of time. Those groups already in the process of crystallizing a commitment by the time they reach the campus, are the natural foci of intensive Zionist activity. They represent the highest expression of Zionist values, with which previously unaffiliated Zionist youth

can gradually come to identify.

It must be emphasized again that within the framework of existing conditions, the majority of undergraduates are, really, still adolescents. They are searching for an identity; hence, they are potentially ready for a Zionist youth movement. It is one of the characteristics of the early Sixties (as against the early Fifties) that many students are looking for a meaningful cause to which they can commit themselves. The high proportion of Jewish youth involved in the various peace and civil rights movements is a striking indication of this.

The problem now is that the committed Zionist nuclei do not attempt to make their presence known—even within S.Z.O. Thus, the opportunity to mobilize college youth for Zionism has, to a great extent, been lost. The social isolation of the committed Zionist youth movements—particularly Labor Zionist youth—is responsible for the fact that, at present, the contact with campus youth is not effectively made.

Access to campus youth is one of the basic prerequisites of a united Zionist youth movement. The balance of the problem is to combine this with the broad access to the Jewish community represented by Young Judaea, and the intensive Zionist commitment traditionally expressed by the Labor Zionist youth movements. A united religious Zionist youth movement would also find a *modus operandi* within such a framework, just as the religious groups have within S.Z.O. today.

Such a movement would span all the adolescent years as well as early adulthood. It should be possible to join at any time, from Junior High School until the undergraduate years at col-

lege. By including members from many backgrounds—people who have joined at various ages and stages—the basis will be laid for a far more heterogeneous and dynamic movement. Its creative potential, ideologically, would certainly be much greater than that which exists today. Such a movement would, hopefully, develop sufficient autonomy to proceed in new directions—organizationally and ideologically—without interference. Such a movement could mobilize increasing numbers of young American *olim* (emigrants to Israel)—both as individuals and in groups.

Finally, not the least of the long-term results of a united Zionist youth might be the revitalization and unification of the adult Zionist movement.

A Zionist youth movement would continue to be a minority. But, hopefully, it would be considered the elite of American Jewish youth. Its positions, if unpopular, should at least be comprehensible. Although absolute numbers should not be the sole criterion of effectiveness, there is reason to believe that consolidation would result in a larger, more influential movement.

Unification will not automatically produce an effective Zionist youth movement.

However, if this aim is ever to be achieved, such a step is necessary. It should be taken gradually over the next few years, as some of the internal problems within various groups that I have mentioned are overcome.

It is a step that must be taken if the Zionist movement in the world's largest Jewish community is to play a meaningful role in the generation to come.

From THE MACCABEAN, Volume 1, Number 1

Topical

Issues

Quinton

Poppy

YOU CAN HELP IMPLEMENT THE NEW PROGRAM!

The 27th V'ida marked what may be a turning point in the recent history of Habonim. The majority of our chaverim came to realize that to justify our existence as a chalutzic Zionist youth movement in America we must lay our chief emphasis on becoming an ideologically oriented older movement of self-realization. Without in any way depreciating our work with younger chanichim we all began to realize that our movement had come to over-emphasize this aspect of our work to the exclusion of organizational and educational work in the Bonim and Maapilim shchavot.

Thus we passed a number of key resolutions dealing with the educational priority to be given to Bonim chinuch, authorizing the establishment of a Bonim camp, setting new and higher standards for the Workshop, and encouraging the establishment of Maapilim kvutzot. It is of course the responsibility of the Merkaz to implement these resolutions without delay and the Maapilim of the movement have the right to demand of the Merkaz the fulfillment of both the letter and the spirit of the V'ida resolutions. There is much, however, that the individual Maapil (especially if he or she has a leadership position in the Ken) can do to implement the V'ida resolutions and thus effectively supplement the efforts of the Merkaz.

The Concepts of a Bonim Kvutza:

One of the most important things any Maapil in contact with Bonim can do is to interpret again and again to the Boneh that his chief function in the movement is to learn. The ken luach should be planned in such a way that the optimum time is budgeted for Bonim kvutza meetings rather than, for example, the K.M. Bet. K.M. Bet in many kinim has come to be far more important than the Bonim kvutza. K.M. Bet is important and should continue but those whose participation in Bonim activities has been limited to K.M. Bet will adjust with difficulty to the idea of a Bonim kvutza.

In many kinim, the "optimum time" -- i.e. the time when chevre are most prepared to come out, is Friday night. This night should then be used for Bonim kvutza meetings if this is the case. Those who want K.M. Bet will also be prepared to come out at an unpopular time -- e.g. a weekday evening or a Sunday morning.

The success of the Bonim kvutza will depend on whether it can be moulded into a chevra as well. Some kind of non-chinuch, chevra activity should be held by a kvutza twice a month if possible.

An intensive Bonim chinuch program can be implemented only through a strong kvutza framework. What can be done in your ken to strengthen the Bonim kvutzot?! Remember hadracha with Bonim is an important tafkid of the Maapilim.

Attitudes of Bonim Towards the Workshop:

One of the more controversial issues at the V'ida was the question of Workshop age and standards. It will continue to be very difficult for many chaverim who for years have been educated to the concept of "workshop or you're not with it" to accept the idea of postponing their year on the workshop. We are all aware that such a change can be instituted only gradually.

Every Maapil who has some contact with Bonim should take aside every Boneh who is a potential Workshopper and discuss this matter with him. In general, Bonim will be worried about "interrupting" their college education. With a very few exceptions (e.g. someone going into nursing school) Bonim can be honestly reassured that their first two years of college will be of such a general and non-specific nature that there is actually no interruption. The positive aspects of deferring Workshop should be pointed out. Firstly, there is the increased emotional maturity of the chaver which will enable him or her to absorb the experience of Israel much more objectively. Secondly, with some college background the chaver will be able to make a more intelligent vocational decision with regard to Israel. Thirdly, the long gap between

workshop and hagshama is reduced. The time at which life decisions are made in our society, as against the time at which life decisions are often made by Israeli youth, should also be emphasized. In Eastern Europe of a generation ago life decisions were also made at a much earlier age. It must be explained to the Boneh that the concept of making a life decision at age 18 is something we have inherited from a different time in the history of the Zionist youth movement. Most intelligent Bonim, after some discussion, will see that one set of social expectations and economic conditions in Eastern Europe (or even America) a generation ago produced chaverim prepared to make life decisions at age 17 or 18. In America today another set of conditions exists -- there is a moratorium on adolescent development which sometimes lasts into the early twenties. Therefore, it is better if chaverim wait until they are a little older before undertaking an experience the stated purpose of which is to crystallize into life decisions.

My personal observations have led me to believe that the factor of age is more important in the case of boys than in the case of girls. Those chaverim in accelerated courses who graduate at ages 16 and 17 are in particular to be dissuaded from going to Israel with the "year they have gained." Their intelligence is not a substitute for psychological and social maturity.

Of equal importance is the matter of persuading Bonim to increase their knowledge of Hebrew. General pronouncements from the National Office on the necessity of passing a test in Chamesh Meot Milim will not be half as effective as sitting down with every Boneh and emphasizing to him individually the importance of learning Hebrew. If you are a post-Workshopper (and the majority of the readers of this publication fall into that category) you should make a point of informally encouraging the Bonim in your Ken not only to reach the level of 500 words but go even higher if they can. Is there one of you that can deny that you would have been better off in Israel had you been able to enter a higher Ivrit kita to begin with? Start speaking to the chevre that are now in their sophomore and junior years at high school!

It is my hope that the chinuch program for Bonim and Maapilim will improve to such an extent in the near future that there will not be the feeling: "If I don't go on the Workshop now, there will be nothing for me in Habonim." It is also my hope that Machaneh Bonim, in particular, will deal with the question of adolescence, maturation and the time to go on the Workshop. However, the efforts of the Maapilim (especially the Merakzim) are central.

It is my sincere belief that it is worth risking the loss of a few chaverim from the Workshop program during the next few years if, by doing so, we can get an older and better qualified group to go on the Workshop. I know it will not be easy to implement the resolutions dealing with the Workshop.

Maapilim Activities:

Although it is true that the National Office should have taken far more initiative in the matter of rambling Maapilim seminars and "priming the pump" insofar as Maapilim activities are concerned, it is also true that Maapilim themselves can take the initiative and form kvutzot with organized activities.

The importance of the resolution of working in, through, with and for the Student Zionist Organization cannot be over emphasized. I am well aware that some chaverim have more time for this sort of thing than others. However, Habonim must become known in the circles of Jewish youth on the campus that are searching for something meaningful. Here are potential members for our Garinim, our camp staffs, and the movement in general.

The problem of getting new members at the Maapilim age is one that should be handled carefully. In general, I would say that no established Maapilim kvutza should attempt to increase its non-movement size by more than 10% to 20% of its movement

membership in a given year. The absorption of new Maapilim should be dealt with on an individual basis - wherever possible they should be encouraged to seek a position in a Habonim camp. They can also be used for minor tafkidim in the Ken on a time to time basis. It is important not to give them tafkidim that involve regular responsibility. New Maapilim should be broken in with "one-time" tafkidim gradually increasing in frequency.

Specific Activities and Projects:

Specific activities and projects for Maapilim kvutzot are:

- a. Becoming active in the leadership of S.Z.O. on campuses of our universities. S.Z.O. is our arm on campus towards bringing the impact of Zionism to the attention of the Jewish young adult and therefore must be an important project of any Maapilim kvutza.
- b. Organizing and being active on a Zionist or Jewish Youth Council. The purpose is obviously for Zionist youth to reach attention of the Jewish community. Such projects for the whole ken as a Yom Atzmaut parade, an Israeli Dance Festival, or certain demonstrations for social action can be achieved easier and quicker through such councils. Very often they cannot be achieved at all without joint participation through a council.
- c. Organizing a Maapilim 'Speakers and Specialty Bureau.' A list can be made up of chaverim of the Maapilim shichva who are able to speak on various topics about Israel or Zionism, and of the chaverim who are able to teach things such as Israel song and dance. This list would be sent out to all synagogues, organizations, schools and centers. It would then be possible for them to ask chaverim of Habonim to various of their functions.
- d. Sponsoring and organizing a Jewish Music or Jewish Dance Festival in the community for participation by all movements.
- e. A Maapilim forum or symposium presented by the Maapilim kvutza and which is publicized in the college community, among Jewish youth and among the senior organizations. The topic should be of Jewish interest and the symposium speakers should be themselves chaverim of the Maapilim kvutza.
- f. Sponsoring and organizing a personality series in which a few times during the year important or controversial figures are heard and questioned by the Jewish young adult community.
- g. Local Maapilim all-day Y'mei Iyun on topics pertinent to chaverim in the movement. People should be provided from the National Office for these seminars in places where they are needed.
- h. Organizing a local seminar (it does not have to be a long one) for Bonim of Habonim and other Jewish youth in the area.
- i. Constant awareness of topical issues or events which can be of interest to the kvutza and which the kvutza should possibly act upon. Also 'Letters to the Editor' of newspapers in the community concerning topics related to Israel and other discussions that had gone on within the Maapilim kvutza.
- j. Joint meetings with groups for Social Action and possibly lending some of our Maapilim's efforts towards their work.

The National Maapilim Chevra:

One of the great lacks in Habonim has been the absence of the feeling among Maapilim that they exist within a framework of a national chevra. The bonds are all too often

on the basis of post-workshop cliques.

If the movement is to really exist as a viable entity at the Maapilim level, it cannot afford to be continually splintered among various lines. I have mentioned the split among different workshop chevrot. There is also the split between those within different garinim. There is the split between those in a garin and those not in a garin. There is the split between the Merkaz and the rest of the movement. There is often the split between National Office and the Merkaz. Most of all, there is too much of a parochial, local outlook on the part of Maapilim in a given ken and not enough of a national outlook and unified national Habonim identity.

In order for the movement to become Maapilim centered in the spirit of the V'ida, a national Maapilim chevra must come into being. It can do so only on the basis of the organization of Maapilim kvutzot. In addition, these kvutzot must take an active interest and express themselves in the national operation of the movement. The review and discussion of Merkaz minutes should be an integral part of the Maapilim chinuch program. Only thus can chaverim all over the country come to feel nationally responsible as a group, for the movement.

The organization of Maapilim kvutzot largely rests on local initiative. In my opinion the Rosh of an actively functioning Maapilim Kvutza should have the status of a merakez to emphasize the importance of this tafkid (this does not mean he should necessarily be paid).

The question of political activity was hotly debated at the V'ida. I wish to restrict myself to the question of political activity from the point of view of the individual Maapilim kvutza.

Politics is the science of the affairs of man. By political activity of the Maapilim kvutza I mean that kind of activity which in and of itself seeks to change the affairs of men. In the case of a youth movement the amount of change that can be brought about even by the group action of a Maapilim kvutza may not be great. However, the attempt to act politically as a group is in and of itself part of the chinuch of Maapilim.

It is not enough simply to write a list of activities such as: SANE, Student Peace movement, Liberal Party (N.Y.), N.D.P. (Canada), Young Democrats, Negro rights. Our emphasis should be on action orientation. Although we do not at this time take official stands on political issues, there is no reason why a Maapilim kvutza cannot volunteer to do canvassing in key ridings at election time. A big element in political work is dramatic effectiveness--thus the dramatic impact of Vancouver's Chanuka parade on the Jewish community there and the dramatic effect of Baltimore's picketing. Participation in such things as SANE and peace marches is of greater value to the participating chaver than to the actual cause of these organizations. (This is a personal opinion because these latter are essentially passive rather than action-oriented movements of protest.)

Sometimes one never knows about the effectiveness of political action. In June 1961 a group of Maapilim in Vancouver informally went to the headquarters of the New Democratic Party (Social Democratic Party) of Canada and volunteered to distribute campaign literature. It was the last weekend before the general election. They distributed over a thousand pamphlets in the key riding of Vancouver-Burrard. The New Democratic Party candidate won by the slim margin of 80 votes. (Vancouver Habonim now talks about "their" man in Ottawa.)

But the really important area of political activity, in my personal opinion, is the Jewish community. This means the Jewish community centers, the Jewish youth councils, the Zionist youth councils and SZO. By whatever means available to it, it is the

tafkid of Habonim to "Labor Zionize" its Jewish Community and especially the youth of that community. If you can't "Labor Zionize" them, then just "Zionize" them. If that is impossible, then at least try to Judaize them a little bit. In future issues of Hamaapil we will try to review specific possibilities of political action within each Jewish community. This should be one of the first items to be discussed by each Maapilim kvutza.

The Maapilim have responsibilities for external political action that I have just described. I also believe that they are responsible for internal political action. This means being aware of what is going on in the national movement and reacting to it. It has been the fault of too many past Habonim administrations that once they are in office they consider themselves to be omniscient in all matters pertaining to national policy. The policies and actions (or lack thereof) by the Merkaz of the movement should be reviewed by the individual Maapilim kvutzot and they should feel a personal interest in national matters. Only thus can a nationally conscious Maapilim chevra come into being.

from HAMAAPIL, Volume III, Number 1, Fall 1962

HABONIM, THE CAMPUS, AND S.Z.O.

Several years have passed since this article was written and the discussion is not yet closed. I remain convinced as ever of the importance of Habonim's work on the campus. I also feel that Habonim must be active in the Student Zionist Organization on a national level. I think the extent of our local involvement will have to vary with the situation. Chaverim should not overlook the fact that in the case of limited resources, Habonim would do well to concentrate on such activities as S.Z.O. Regional seminars. It is at such seminars that we reach a maximum number of serious people with relatively little investment of time on our part.

As a chalutzic and Labor Zionist youth movement with a notable intellectual tradition and a tradition of social action, one might imagine that of all places where the influence of Habonim would be felt, first and foremost would be the university campus. However, with a few rare exceptions, it is not so. Habonim is not known on the campus in general and where it is known it is either considered to be for "crackpots" or for "children".

In my opinion, a Labor Zionist youth movement that is not felt on the campus, a Labor Zionist youth movement that does not have some type of dynamic relationship to university life remains a Labor Zionist youth movement unfulfilled. It is on the campus that new ideas are constantly being tried out. It is on the campus that Jewish youth often search for something -- they do not know what -- and do not find it. It is through the intellectual life of the campus that a Jewish community can be influenced. It is college age youth, above all, who can participate in and realize social action -- witness the "Freedom Riders" and the Peace Corps. I will return to this question of social action later.

THE STUDENT ZIONIST ORGANIZATION

The situation within the Student Zionist Organization today is both symptomatic of the state of some of the Jewish youth on the campus as well as being symptomatic of the state of the Maapilim age-level in all the Zionist youth movements -- especially Habonim.

First, how is the situation in S.Z.O. symptomatic of the state of Jewish youth on campus?

S.Z.O. has some 3500 members on 116 university campuses in North America. However, its yearly turn-over is 1500. This turn-over takes place mostly in the first two years of campus life. Thus, S.Z.O. is one of the many "new" things some Jewish students try out on the campus as they search for "something".

By the time the Junior year rolls around, most have given up "searching" and are content to slip quietly into the mainstream of Jewish youth on campus -- propelled by our contemporary social processes and the need for status -- into "taking a course," (and how well we know from our friends that just about any course will do) then into the professions, and from there to synagogue-center in the suburbs. The important thing is that there is a certain intellectual climate on the campus today that is different from the McCarthy period of the early and even mid-Nineteen Fifties. At certain stages some students, including some Jewish students, are looking for something. The relatively large, widespread (remember 116 campuses), and unstable membership of S.Z.O. is symptomatic of this.

Secondly, and of greater importance, how is the situation within the Student Zionist Organization symptomatic of the state of the Maapilim age-level in the Zionist youth movements -- especially Habonim?

Briefly, our members on campus are generally the leadership of the local ken and they are too busy and/or indifferent to build up a Habonim identity on the campus. Socially, our chaverim tend to be introverted as a group -- in general they are a post-Workshop clique. They are putting in time in Habonim and on the campus until the day comes to go on Aliya. As a direct result, most of our members on campus do not even take out membership cards in S.Z.O. and fewer still actively participate. This includes the many Maapilim who are not active in the ken and who could be effective working with their peers on campus. Often these chaverim are lost to other campus organizations -- we fail to utilize their abilities and needs in a Habonim framework.

Of the 3500 members of S.Z.O., perhaps 100 are members of Zionist youth movements -- in general they are not the leadership. Perhaps another few hundred are ex-members of the Zionist youth movements but with a few exceptions, they are generally the people who were the "shleppers" in our movement and this is their role in S.Z.O. as well.

Thus, the 3500 members of S.Z.O. are not really Zionist in terms of Zionist commitment in the sense that we in Habonim understand this term. Nor is the leadership of S.Z.O. by and large a committed group. It is true that many of the leaders of S.Z.O. think in terms of aliya personally. But they have no concept of a movement which embraces the totality of one's existence and seeks to make an impact both in Israel and the American Jewish community. This is not their fault -- their background is the B'nai B'rith Youth Organization, and U.S.Y. or L.T.F. Their background is not the Zionist youth movement. These people (and I am personally acquainted with a good many of them) are actually doing not too badly considering their background.

THE QUESTION OF COMMITMENT

The real tragedy is that S.Z.O. continually loses people who really want something to commit themselves to -- there is nothing to "commit" oneself to in S.Z.O., in the sense that we commit ourselves in Habonim. As originally envisaged, S.Z.O. was to have been a multi-party organization -- i.e., a member could join the general "umbrella organization" of the S.Z.O. and then, if he wished to commit himself more intensively, he could seek out a group "under the umbrella" and join it. At the same time, those already in a tnuah were not supposed to lose their identity. What has happened?

The Zionist youth movements, especially Habonim, have simply abdicated their original position of leadership on the campus that they held 15 and 20 years ago -- we are too busy and too indifferent. If somebody were to consciously attempt to seek us out, it would be difficult enough to find us. However, the vast majority never come into contact with an image of chalutzic youth or if they do, it is a rather negative image created by the introverted nature of the Maapilim groups that we do have.

But we have to pursue this problem further and we have to analyse ourselves more closely to grasp some of the subtle factors that are at work within the Maapilim shichva and in the movement which result in the introversion and lack of ability to aggressively face the Jewish youth on campus and ultimately the Jewish community.

PROBLEMS OF BEING AND PROBLEMS OF DOING

If we were to attempt a three line analysis of what Habonim is in North America today, we would have a circular analysis that would run like this: We are educating

chanichim to go on the Workshop to come back to the movement to educate chanichim to go on the Workshop to come back to the movement to educate chanichim to go on the Workshop, etc. Each year this tight little circle results in an aliya of some 30 people. If the movement were to grow from 2000 to 4000, we would have an aliya of 60 or 70, and that is all. The movement is totally concerned with the maintenance of this tight little circle -- the maintenance of this circle involves the every day problems of being, the problems of existence of the movement. But what are we DOING?

As I wrote in Furrows, it is an identifying feature of a chalutzic movement, that it attempts to have an impact on the society from which it arises and to which it is directed. This means social action in America and the American Jewish community as well as in Israel.

Our Maapilim today do not see themselves as conscious instruments for the "Zionization" of the American Jewish community.

We must pursue our analysis to the end. The tight little circle of existence that I have represented explains in part the introvertedness of our movement even though as individuals, our leadership is not necessarily introverted in the psychological sense. However, because of the value we place on people who deal competently with the problems of existence (the problems of being), we tend to down-grade and discourage people who are involved with problems of doing.

Thus, Maapilim who might be very effective working with peers on the campus in a Habonim framework or with a "Habonim" identity do not do so within Habonim, because in Habonim there is no status or recognition given to such activity -- especially on local levels. The mores of Habonim seem to say that it is better for a Maapil to take a kvutza of Bonim, give them a bad movement experience and give himself a feeling of inadequacy in the movement, than it is for the Maapil to perform non-hadracha tasks for which he may be much better suited. Indeed, I am personally acquainted with Maapilim who have literally been driven out of the movement because of this kind of thing.

What do I mean by engaging in problems of "doing"? On the Maapilim level I mean working in and through S.Z.O., "infiltrating" other Jewish organizations with our people and ideas, public relations work on behalf of our kinim, and other essentially political activity. The Maapilim have to play politics within the American Jewish community and the first place to begin, in my opinion, is on the campus. The first place to begin on the campus is within the S.Z.O. -- where we belong anyway. This is social action; this is the bread and butter work of a movement which seeks to change its surrounding society.

Many chaverim look down upon "playing politics" and "wheeling and dealing." However, we live in a political world, and if we want to change society these are abilities we must develop in the Maapilim shichva - alongside the ability to be a good madrich, or merakez in the limited organizational and educational sense. Let no one construe that I am implying that hadrachah is of secondary importance in Habonim. It is the complete LACK OF EMPHASIS of our work on the campus that concerns me.

In summary, I am suggesting that there are good theoretical reasons for us to work in S.Z.O. I might also add that at recent V'idot we have "pledged ourselves to work for the continued growth" of S.Z.O. Certainly we have not taken these resolutions seriously.

from HAMAAPIL, Volume 1, Number 2,
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KIBBUTZ, THE PROFESSIONAL AND THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

It is important to remember that the importance of the kibbutz in the development of the Jewish National Home has expressed itself in two ways, the practical and the ideological. By "practical importance" I refer to the role the kibbutz has played in such things as defence and the settling of areas that otherwise might not have been settled at all (swamps, deserts). By "ideological importance" I refer to the fact that the kibbutz is an attempted expression of the messianic-Zionist vision of a society trying to perfect the relationships between man and man. Finally, we must remember that the co-operative nature of the kibbutz made it and the manpower within it particularly possible to be utilized in the service of the Jewish people. This is both practical and ideological significance.

It seems to me that the practical importance of the kibbutz is being seriously questioned. This is not the place to discuss that issue but in my opinion the validity of the kibbutz as a way of life must rest on ideological grounds. Its importance in the day to day life of the state of Israel may vary (I am not suggesting that it should be minimized), but to me this is a secondary consideration.

Classically, the kibbutzim have been agricultural enterprises. There has been much talk about their trend to "industrialization." Much of this is true, but what is even more true is that in order for the agricultural sector of the kibbutz to stay competitive it will inevitably have to be automated, thus reducing the percentage of manpower required in agriculture even more drastically. Even the kibbutz industries may become increasingly automated in order to decrease the need for "hired labor."

Avodat Chutz:

A limited number of professionals have always been absorbed within the kibbutz to supply the particular needs of the kibbutz. Nurses, teachers, doctors, and engineers fit into this category. However, American Habonim is arriving at the point when the great majority of the aliyah in its kibbutz garinim will consist of professionals. To my mind this inevitably means avodat chutz on a much larger scale. The problems that this will pose to the social integrity of the kibbutz are great, but the challenge must be met if the kibbutz is to remain a focus for American chalutzic aliyah. A place like Gesher Haziv can conceivably "export" professional skills to nearby urban areas as well as to the neighbouring centers of new immigrants. In the absorption of new immigrants it may be particularly helpful if teachers and social workers of a high standard are made available in areas that might ordinarily have to make do with "second best." The export of professionals to surrounding cities, in key areas, can give the kibbutz a more meaningful role to play in urban development as well.

It should not be forgotten that professional training can sometimes be used in a non-vocational way. This is especially true in things such as social work, psychology, and sociology. For example, it is an advantage for those who at any time may have positions of responsibility (even something like Rosh Mitbach) to have some training in psychology or business administration.

The Kibbutz, Higher Education, and the Social Sciences:

I think we partially err in Habonim by attempting to interpret the problems and roles that our chaverim will have to face and play on the kibbutz purely in terms of vocational adjustment. Without a doubt, this problem does exist and in the

above section I tried to relate to it. But I think that the problem of the chaver with a higher education should be another real focus of discussion. By higher education I do not refer here to the "lowly" B.A. Rather, I refer to those with post-graduate degrees. For it is apparent that the vast majority of those with ability to do so are intending to take such degrees. This even includes many chaverim in the Garinim. Of course, there is the inescapable fact that a very large proportion of our chaverim are already pursuing these degrees in the humanities and/or the social sciences. To what meaningful use can such education be put in the kibbutz? Will those so educated suffer from continual intellectual frustration and eventually atrophy under the inexorable stress and strain of the daily routine inherent in kibbutz living?

It is within this context that the primary ideological purpose of the kibbutz must be mentioned again. The kibbutz was, and is, primarily a social experiment concerned with the perfection of interpersonal relationships. As such, it is an enterprise very much bound up with philosophy (in the broadest sense) and the entire spectrum of the social sciences. Such an ideological experiment, in order to be conducted meaningfully, requires a large element of people in the kibbutz movement with higher education in the humanities and the social sciences. During the first fifty years of the kibbutz, the needs of the Jewish National Home and pressure of events were in many cases the chief determinants of the forms the kibbutz took. I feel that a time is approaching when the dynamism in the kibbutz movement will have to come from ferment within the movement itself. That ferment can receive considerable impetus from people who have some academic knowledge of the sciences that deal with society itself. Dr. Henrik Infield says:

"....the kibbutzim (represent) a pattern of social innovation that comes as close to being experimental as is at all possible in human relations. If for no other reason than this the co-operative community should be of prime interest to anybody concerned with the science of society.*"

Of course, it is very fine to say that the kibbutz should be studied by social scientists. However, does this also mean that the academicians should determine the precise forms this social experiment should take? Or should the Israeli government perhaps manipulate the social and economic structure of the kibbutzim to maximum advantage for, let us say, the absorption of Moroccan immigrants? We know that in Russia the kolkhoz is manipulated by the government, in accordance with the presumed needs of the Soviet state. But Infield goes on to point out that if a social experiment is to have ethical and moral validity, in a democratic society, then,

...."the initiative has to come from the people themselves...Actually, they act, as a group, not unlike the scientist who tests the effectiveness of a new serum on his own body first. This action which, if not heroic, certainly is anything but unethical.**"

Thus, I think that there is a continual source of challenge to those chaverim who see their higher education as something which makes them more fit to be intelligent molders of the social experiment to which they are going to dedicate the rest of their lives. Education in the social sciences seems to me to be particularly relevant. Nor should a higher education be a source of intellectual frustration to the chaver if he is part of a group with a similar outlook.

From HAMAAPIL, Volume III, Number 4, March, 1963

*Henrik F. Infield, The Sociological Study of Co-operation, Sociology of Co-operation Monograph #3, Community Press, Glen Gardner N.J., 1956, p. 35.

**Ibid., p. 36

NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION OF HABONIM

The subject of Habonim national administration deserves an article by itself. I do not want to pretend to fully discuss all the issues that are involved in the national administration, but I do want to raise a few--some practical and some conceptual.

The first practical issue is the level of involvement of the national Maapilim chevra in the national administration. There might be some people of the opinion that I have no right, for example, to discuss problems with reference to shlichim, or personnel, or even Workshop, without first discussing them at the "Merkaz." I believe that this attitude of mind or even the belief that this attitude of mind exists, is one of the roots of that feeling of "we" and "they" in terms of the relations between the National Office and the Kinim. It is crippling our feeling for each other and our self-respect as a united Maapilim chevra. Often it seems that everyone is out for himself. This matter is so loaded with everyone's personal experiences (all the remembered ones are negative) with the National Office, that we forget the elementary point that the "they" in the National Office are really only the "us" who happen to be in New York and the Mazkirut happens to be the "us" two or three years from now. Far be it from me to "white-wash" the National Office, but the criticism of its activities must become official -- i.e. not just a matter of snide remarks. The criticisms must become objective; otherwise we lose all our self-respect as a movement. Indeed, it was one of the purposes in the founding of HAMAAPIL to provide a forum within which the National Maapilim chevra could express themselves freely with regard to such matters. If chevre feel they have criticism of the action of particular people then here too there must be a recognized way of expressing them -- one way to do this would be through the Mazkirut with appeal to the Merkaz in the absence of satisfaction. However, I don't believe that personal criticism of a chaver is a subject for any publication. I believe the basic point is that the Maapilim have the right, duty and obligation to be involved in thinking with respect to the principles of national policy and administration.

There are a number of other points with regard to national policy administration that are conceptual in nature rather than practical. They affect problems of administration on local levels as well as the national level.

In my opinion, we make basic mistakes in our approach to budgeting and finance. Basically the movement is not a summer camp or a kibbutz. The latter are business enterprises and have to be regulated like them. In my opinion, the basic financial question in the movement must be to spend money in such a way so as to maximally utilize the human resources and talents available at any given time. We have to have the money to make our best Merakzim available in the places they are most needed at the right time. In a local center if there are many madrichim who know how to handle arts and crafts, then you spend a lot of money on that at that time. Another year the money may go for dance costumes, because that is the thing of the moment. What is the general principle? It is to have as little fixed expense as possible, to hire as few people as you can -- especially part-time people, to have as much money "unassigned" to be used as the opportunity presents itself. Even an "unassigned" section of Habonim's total budget totalling only 10% would make a tremendous difference in making us flexible, and in contrast to a fixed bureaucracy, a movement, administratively, must be flexible.

The concept of communication has to be taken far more seriously by the national administration. My general criticism is that there is too much meaningless communication and too little meaningful communication. What does this mean? First of all, a lot of the material we put out just is not worth it -- a sweeping statement but a subjective feeling which I feel deeply. I don't see the immediate remedy -- it's simply symptomatic of not enough people who have something to say

wanting to say it (assuming they are around). But there is another and remediable aspect to the problem of communication. The communication is often meaningless because too much time has elapsed before it is received -- I do not even speak of things like articles in HAMADPICH on Pesach after Pesach, or the time - lag in editorials in FURROWS which renders most of them meaningless. The core of the problem is lack of quick consistent communication well in advance, between the National Office and the Kinim on personnel matters involving them. Another example is the fact that it takes a month for Merkaz minutes to come out. Still a third aspect of communication problems is that when cities are toured they are still, in spite of efforts to rectify this, not toured properly and thoroughly enough with regard to sizing them up according to the criteria of political youth movements.

There is general complaining about Kinim not communicating with the National Office and this is justified. But it is up to the National Office to take clear initiative in dealing with Kinim--it is not necessarily up to Kinim to continually have to prod the National Office. The end aim of National Office communication must be to have the national Maapilim chevra thinking together with it on the problems of the movement. This just is not the case.

The concept of movement growth is another matter. None of these concepts are clearly stated, but it is my impression that an "organic-growth" theory is prevalent in Habonim. According to this theory, if we have enough Amelim kvutzot we will eventually pyramid up to larger numbers of Maapilim as well. Another aspect of this theory is that we can only build the Maapilim by laying the groundwork in a stronger Bonim program. These things may or may not be true but the trouble with concepts like these is that they are purely organizational and leave out too many intangibles brought into the "equation" by the fact that we are a movement. First of all, it is precisely a movement that has the potential to grow geometrically rather than organically. Movements are unstable in this respect. The opposite is also true -- witness our decline in 1949-1950. For an example of sudden growth of a movement, witness the Southern Negro sit-in movement. As far as we are concerned, I still believe that if we found an approach to the Jewish college student, we might suddenly grow geometrically -- not only in the Maapilim shichva but also in the educational youth organization because many college students might like to work with children as a way of expressing themselves. Of course, such a sudden influx inevitably transforms old ideologies. At present we are going along in a fairly static fashion -- one year 50 less, another year 200 more, occasionally changes in numbers of Kinim take place. "We are inching forward -- all is well" we are told. But I interpret our existence at our present level not as something completely spontaneous, not as something that arises from a welling up of a desire for Jewish self-realization in a Zionist way, but something that is in a large part maintained by the bureaucracy based in Israel -- once again the scepter of the "youth group maintained in America by Ichud HaKvutzot V'Hakibbutzim" is upon us. Please don't misunderstand, I know there are many individuals -- even Garinim who are an expression of Jewish self-realization, but as a movement in terms of North America we are not. If we truly were we would not need shlichim, or financial subsidies from local Chay Commissions. We would be the center of intellectual ferment among Jewish youth.

The sit-ins are not maintained by either shlichim from Africa or by subsidies from a fixed source (sometimes they are supported by NAACP and sometimes not). I know we cannot be like the sit-ins--that is why I accept the principle of shlichim and fixed subsidies. However, there is a spectrum between extremes, that I described, and in terms of our growth we have to be less organic and more spontaneous. To prepare ourselves to become the type of ground in which spontaneous growth of a movement nature can take place, I believe we have to change our ideological approach.

IDEOLOGICAL REFORM:

We have now come to the question of ideological reform... Obviously, every "reform" will be questioned with regard to as whether it is compatible with our "principles." For every potential issue that can be raised, each one of us has our own opinion as to when we would say: "This far but no further." This too is a matter for continuing discussion.

However, without getting into specific ideological issues -- a matter for an even longer article than this one -- I wish to pass an opinion on which ultimately must change the ideology of Habonim. I will use a specific "tactical" example.

In the issue of FURROWS commemorating the Workshop, I read once again on the first page, that Habonim is a "kibbutz-orientated movement." Of course, my personal feeling was that this was a bad statement--especially in terms of my criteria which the writer of the FURROWS article may or may not have agreed with. Once again it seemed to me that Habonim was echoing somebody else's voice -- not its own.

But the only people, according to our criteria, that will have the right to change the ideology -- to truly broaden the concept of chalutziut beyond Kibbutziut or even Hityashvut, are those who have found a concrete way ("tachlis"), of expressing their chalutzic attitude. So far only our Kibbutz garinim have done this. Our professional garin is still a theory--perhaps in five years it will be a reality. And thus, to be ideologically meaningful in terms of movement reality of today, it is my opinion that paradoxically, it is the chevrei-Garin of Habonim that will have to re-define our movement in a way true to Labor Zionism, true to them and relevant to the American Jewish youth of today. They, more than the rest of the movement have the moral right to do this and in a chalutzic youth movement the question of who and why changes ideology is as important as the ideological change itself. I believe the time is ripe for change and that it will be up to the Garinim to show that they are ideologically indigenous--i.e. that ideologically they live on more than intellectual hand-outs from Israel. They bear the moral responsibility for Habonim ideology--or the lack of it. Please do not misinterpret what I say. The Garinim do not have the sole "right" to dictate ideological change. It is of course, a matter of discussion for the whole movement. But if the Garinim are not among the leaders in the change, either the change won't take place or the Garinim will become estranged from the movement.

Thus the issues that I feel are alive in Habonim today cover the entire spectrum from the abstract and the ideological to the almost petty details of administration. In the last analysis they are all related. I have attempted to view them all from the perspective of a politically oriented Zionist youth movement and as I have said before, I feel that our self-image in terms of such a movement is the most fundamental issue of all, facing us today.

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